

HALESOWEN CHRONICLE



Thursday, January 24, 2013

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Elsie tributes

Community champion dies at the age of 78

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New restaurant cooks up hot night for charity

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Boxing bout

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Dragons' Den for college students

BUSINESS students will be thrown straight into the "Dragons' Den" – with the launch of a new enterprise academy bearing the name of the programme's star Peter Jones.

Dudley College is celebrating after becoming host to one of only 36 Peter Jones Enterprise Academies in the UK.

The idea is the brainchild of the Dragons' Den star, who launched the first accredited course dedicated to teaching enterprise and entrepreneurship to students.

The course, due to start in September, will focus on supporting young people to set up and run their own business while gaining a qualification.

Mr Jones' vision came about because he wished there had been a similar opportunity around when he was younger.

He said: "In the current economic climate it is essential that the UK workforce is equipped with the right skills to drive forward economic growth."

The college's business enterprise manager, Victoria Greave, said: "We are extremely pleased to have secured the prestigious status of being the only Peter Jones Enterprise Academy in the region."

Pizza firm in hygiene case

A PIZZA firm has been handed a £7,334 court bill after admitting hygiene offences.

Mohammed Hassani, owner of Godfather Pizzeria, Stourbridge Road, pleaded guilty to 11 offences at Dudley Magistrates' Court. The company was fined £3,200 and ordered it to pay £4,134 costs at the hearing on January 10.

Councillor Tracy Wood, cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "People have a right to expect the highest standards of cleanliness when they eat out."

SOFTWARE HELPS TO BEAT THIEVES

SOFTWARE designers from Cradley Heath have unveiled touchscreen computer software designed to crack down on metal theft.

It will help scrap metal dealers after new rules were introduced by the government banning cash transactions.

Now Iceblue Marketing and Design, based in Cradley Heath has created the computer programme, called MetalTrack.

It records personal details of dealers including photo identification and vehicle registration.

They received requests for the software from firms up and down the country. They have been working with bosses at Brierley Hill firm Mason Metals and showcased the software to the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Melvyn Mottram, during a tour of the site.

He was given a copper cylinder and taken through the process of weighing, recording/storing of personal details and finally payment.

Paul Long, director of MetalTrack, said: "Mason Metals showed real vision to plan ahead for the new laws and to use the latest technology."

"We've had requests for the MetalTrack software from all over the country, from Yorkshire to the south coast and everywhere in between. It was a great pleasure to meet the mayor and show him what local experts can do."

Mason Metals managing director, Andrew Jones, said: "We are obviously proud of our reputation and it was of benefit to be able to show the mayor how that reputation has been built and also of how our innovation will keep us at the forefront of our industry; and technology."

"We keep our business local whenever we can - supplying copper, aluminium and many other metals to West Midlands based foundries for recycling. "A continuation of this thinking was to team up with a fellow local business regarding our software solution - and credit to MetalTrack they saw an opportunity to solve an industry issue; not only our own."

The mayor saw the recycling expertise that has seen the business serve the local economy and environment for more than 50 years.

by Andrew Turton

Read all about it! Newsagents retire



Surendra and Kala Patel with their daughters Divya, left, and Dilusha Ghoshdastidar with her husband Joydeep

A HALESOWEN couple have sold their final newspaper after closing the doors on the shop they have run for more than 30 years for the final time.

Surendra and Kala Patel started running Dilshur News, in Alexandra Road, in July 1980.

But after decades of early-morning starts, the couple, both 61, have now decided to enjoy their retirement.

They were joined by daughters Divya, 27, and Dilusha, 35, for their last day on Saturday and laid on cakes and drinks as a farewell to customers.

No-one is taking over the shop but the family plan to continue living above the store in the short-term. Over the course of 33 years, the couple have only had three week-long holidays due to the demands of running the shop.

Mr Patel said: "That is one week a decade. We have had a wonderful time and a wonderful life here at the shop."

"It has been excellent being a part of this community and we have a lot of

great memories which we will take into our retirement. We have seen children who once worked for us as paper boys and girls grow up to become parents of their own."

"There have been a lot of changes over the years in this area but the community has always been welcoming and supportive."

Mrs Patel said when they first started they used to open at 5.30am so the factory workers on shifts could come in and get their papers. "In the time we have been here the factories have mainly closed," she said.

Teaching

Divya, who was born at flat above the shop and grew up at the store, said: "I remember mum and dad teaching me and my sister to give people their change when we were very young."

Mr Patel said it had been hard work over the years and he and his wife now planned to take it easy.



Surendra Patel in his shop in 1987

Woman is taken to hospital after fire

AN elderly woman was found collapsed at her home in Cradley Heath after a blaze broke out in the kitchen.

Firefighters discovered the unconscious pensioner.

She is believed to have suffered severe smoke inhalation during the fire, which happened on Sunday.

Crews were called to the terraced house in Bearmore Road, Cradley Heath, at 4.45pm.

The woman was taken to Sandwell Hospital in a "very poorly" condition.

West Midlands Fire spokesman Dave Burns said: "The fire itself was not serious but the elderly lady living there has taken in a fair amount of smoke."

It is believed a neighbour or passer-by raised the alarm after seeing smoke billowing from the rear of the house. Crews from Smethwick and Cradley Heath were called to the scene.

Fire investigators have visited the property to identify the cause of the blaze.

In Birmingham, a woman died on Sunday after inhaling smoke at a fire in her home in the Aston area of the city.

The fire service was withholding further details until her relatives could be told.

Welcome for health centre

A £6 MILLION plan for a health centre in Lye will bring a welcome boost to the town, a senior councillor says.

Proposals for the development on land between Jackson Street and Clinic Drive have been recommended for approval by council planners.

More than 30 jobs could be created at the centre which will house GP surgeries and provide specialist treatments. Ward councillor Pete Lowe said it would help to regenerate the area.

He said: "This is welcome news. The scheme has been in the planning stage for some time."

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Snow helps police to track down suspects

THE snow that brought chaos across Dudley borough also gave joy to some and a bit of help to police.

A dog's snowy paw prints led police on a mile-long journey to the home of two suspected metal thieves after a gas meter was snatched from the front of a Coseley house.

A resident heard a noise and opened the curtains to see two men and a dog running from the front of his house in Langley Avenue on Friday.

He realised the gas meter had been ripped clear of the mains and the pipework had been stolen.

Police followed footprints in the snow, which ran parallel with a dog's paw prints, along residential streets and playing fields for over a mile.

After following the tracks right up to the front door of a house, police entered the property and found two men and a dog inside.

Both men, aged 21 and 33, arrested on suspicion of theft were released on police bail pending further inquiries.

Sgt James Jones from Brierley Hill police, said: "The fact that we knew we were looking for the specific tracks of two people and a dog meant officers were able to establish exactly which prints to follow."

Smashed

After cars were pelted with bricks in Sedgley police were able to catch one teenage suspect by following footprints in the snow.

Windows were smashed and one vehicle was overturned by a gang of youths in Bilston Street, Sedgley. Police arrested a 17-year-old after officers followed tracks in the snow at around 11.10pm on Thursday.

Police said bricks were thrown at a small number of cars, including a private hire taxi smashing windows.

The driver was uninjured during the incident, near to the Beacon Hotel. A car was also turned onto its side in nearby Dormston Drive.

Sgt Rob Simpson, who covers the Sedgley neighbourhood, said: "The quick response of officers in the area meant we were able to arrest a lad nearby for the damage."

One resident had his van kicked and dented. The 58-year-old, who did want to be named for fear of reprisals, said: "The little hooligans were causing havoc all the way down the road."

The teenager was released on police bail pending further inquiries. Witnesses should call 101.

A number of schools in the borough were closed and operations at Russell's Hall Hospital were cancelled. Buses services were hit.

Bosses at the Black Country Living Museum, Tipton Road Dudley, opted to keep it closed.

Assistant visitor services manager John Ryan said: "It would



Snowed in ... a view of Kniver from St Peter's Church looking down at The Cross Inn Picture: Alan Evans



Two year old tigers Daseep and Tschuna play in the snow at Dudley Zoological Gardens

have been too hazardous for both visitors and staff to open the site. We just could not take the risk."

But Dudley Zoo remained open and its tigers Daseep and Tschuna enjoyed their first taste of Black Country snow.

A meeting due to be to outline a campaign group's plans to save Dudley Hippodrome from demolition was postponed. It had been due

to take place at the Station Hotel, opposite the threatened venue.

Since Friday, volunteers from the West Midlands 4x4 Response Group have been called out to help on more than 130 occasions.

The team use their 4x4 off road vehicles to help out the emergency services to rescue those who are in trouble, and to transport medical and support staff around the region.



Tim Childe, of Halesowen, from West Midlands 4x4 Response



Getting along the snow on Brierley Hill High Street



Enjoying the snow at Himey Lucas Drummond, aged six being pulled by grandfather Stephen Iles

Group chairman Simon Brothwood said responders had been sent as far afield as North Staffs, Burton, Hednesford, as well as the Women's Hospital in Birmingham.

He said: "We have had in excess of 400 phone calls. I would like to think that we have made a bit of a difference, not just getting staff to and from work, but with the critical care services."

Recycling firm gives pledge to residents

BOSSES at a firm hoping to open a waste recycling plant in Brierley Hill have made a vow to concerned people living near the site.

They have said there would be no night-time deliveries to the site off Moor Street, if the plans were approved.

The plant, which would be operated by Clean Power, would turn waste into gas to generate electricity for up to 8,000 homes. It would employ up to 30 people.

There has been strong opposition from people living nearby. More than 200 letters were sent to Dudley Council opposing the planning application. More traffic and noise are feared.

In response, bosses said there would be no night-time deliveries to the site, if the plans were approved.

Clean Power made the pledge before a second public consultation at William Street Church and Community Centre this week.

The firm delivered 4,000 leaflets advertising the event. Spokesman Gavin Miller said: "There have been some misconceptions about noise and odour from the site and we want to answer people's concerns."

"We made a condition for no night-time deliveries after listening to what people told us."

Road victim improving

THE condition of a Dudley man who was knocked out in an alleged road rage attack was continuing to improve this week.

Paul Currie, aged 40, of Hilly Hall, was due to be moved from the critical care unit at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, where he had surgery after being injured in Newland Grove, Holly Hall.

Samuel Pagett, aged 25, of Cot Lane, Kingswinford, has been charged with inflicting grievous bodily harm and is due to appear at crown court on April 9.

Leaver taken on

A HALESOWEN College leaver has won an appointment as a trainee with a firm of city accountants. Sukdeep Siottha has joined the Edgbaston-based JW Hinks chartered accountants in Birmingham. He is now taking his AAT course.

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School in mourning as teacher dies at 55

PUPILS and staff at a Kingswinford special school are mourning after a well-loved teacher died at the age of 55.

Mark Skelding taught at the Briar School, Bromley Lane, for 18 years.

Mr Skelding, of Meddins Lane, Kinver, leaves his wife, Catherine, sons James and Joshua, two grandchildren, and his mother, Margaret.

He had been a teacher for a total of 34 years and previously worked at Holly Lodge School in Smethwick.

Russell Hinton, head-teacher at Briar School, said: "All of the children, staff and governors are deeply saddened at the death of Mr Skelding."

"He has been an extremely popular teacher with both staff and pupils for the past 18 years and our thoughts and sympathies are with his family."

Mr Skelding died on January 8 at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital. An inquest will be held.

The funeral will be held on Friday at Stourbridge Crematorium at 11am.

35 Big Mac jobs on way

MCDONALD'S announced it is to create 35 jobs in the Black Country, as part of a commitment to recruit 2,500 staff in the UK by the end of the year.

McDonald's franchisee, Paul Ramsey who owns three restaurants in Oldbury and West Bromwich, said: "In 2012 we added some fantastic crew from the local community to our team. I believe it's important to continue giving young people the chance to get experience."

Support given for pizza plan

PLANS for a pizza shop in Halesowen has received support from the community. A petition with more than 100 signatures has backed the planning application for the empty shop in Hurst Green Shopping Centre, Woodbury Road.

Hawne Farm Shops had operated from the store. Dudley Council will make a decision next month.

Tributes paid after death of choir founder



Choir member Brian Porter

TRIBUTES have been paid to a former teacher and choir founder member who has died at the age of 81.

Brian Porter sang with Cradley Heath's Voices in Harmony.

He had been with them since they were founded in 1997 and was today described as "caring, loving and loyal" by relatives and friends.

Mr Porter, of Halesowen, had taken part in the choir's first public event. This was a performance of Handel's Messiah in West

Bromwich Town Hall with the Sandwell Youth Orchestra during the same year.

He had vowed to continue performing with the choir for as long as he could but the rehearsal following the Festival of Remembrance in November was his final one as he was taken ill shortly afterwards.

During his working life Mr Porter was a teacher and held posts at Woodgate Primary and Woodcock Hill Primary Schools, both in Bartley Green, Birmingham.

Among his hobbies was ballroom, country and line dancing and he attended sessions every week with his wife of 58 years, Lorna.

He was also a keen rambler and would go for a three to five-mile walk every Monday with a group of walkers.

Mr Porter leaves a wife, Lorna, son Kevin and three grandchildren. Paying tribute to her husband, Mrs Porter said: "He was a caring and loving husband, father and grandfather." Choir musical direc-

tor Stephen Bradley said "Brian loved to sing and he had been a loyal member for all the choir's 16 years and will be sorely missed."

Members of Voices in Harmony choir, which has around 70 members, sang 'Abide with Me' at his funeral, which was held at Stourbridge Crematorium.

Family and friends attending the funeral made donations to The Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK and The Foundation for Sudden Infant Deaths.

Court bans prolific thief from stores in borough

Centre is looking for more helpers

A RECRUITMENT drive for volunteers to help raise funds for an adventure centre in Dudley has been launched.

The Friends of Sycamore Adventure are appealing for extra members.

The group is made up of parents and professionals who have an interest in the future development of the site, which is on Old Park Farm Estate.

The group raises funds on behalf of the centre and can be involved in decision making.

People who can contribute a few hours per month are invited to attend a coffee morning which will be held at 9.30am on January 30.

Councillor Tim Crumpton, cabinet member for children's services, said: "Sycamore Adventure is an amazing place for children of all ages and abilities and thousands of Dudley children enjoy playing there."

Drop into Sycamore Adventure, call 01384 813755, or text 07827 858577.



Will Ganniciff senior player ranger and Keith Rogers play service manager

A PROLIFIC shoplifter has been banned from entering any Spar, Boots or Co-op store across the Dudley borough for the next two years. Leaflets featuring Richard Lawley's image are to be distributed in the area.

Anyone who spots him acting suspiciously is asked to call police.

Dudley magistrates were told Lawley, aged 33, was arrested outside Boots at the Merry Hill centre on January 3 as he tried to walk out with aftershave worth £86.50.

Lawley, of no fixed address, went on to be charged with two thefts from Spar on High Street, Lye.

On September 30 he stole £42.68 worth of cheese and bacon and on October 5 he took chicken and sausages worth £15, the court heard.

On December 12, he also took power tools worth £19.99 from Home Bargains in Brierley Hill, the court was told.

Punishment

He admitted all the offences and magistrates sentenced him to 40 weeks in jail.

They also handed him a Criminal Anti-Social Behaviour Order (Crasbo) which prohibits him from entering any Spar, Boots and Co-operative store in Dudley borough.

Pc Lydia Howard of Dudley's Offender Management team, said: "Lawley is



Richard Lawley - banned

now in prison serving his sentence, but as soon as he is released his Crasbo will be in place and the restrictions prohibiting him entering the stores will be implemented. "Should he try ignoring the bans, he'll be arrested and put before the court and face further punishment."

She added: "Leaflets featuring his image will also be distributed locally making everyone aware of his Crasbo and I'd encourage anyone who spots Lawley doing anything he shouldn't be to contact Dudley Police by calling 101."

House plan at shop site

AN EMPTY shop in Halesowen will be turned into a house, under plans submitted to Dudley Council. The owner of the shop in Long Lane lives next door and wants to combine the two properties into one house. He says the property would provide a suitable home for his large extended family. The shop has been empty for the past two years.

NEWS

in brief

Trust looking for new governors

DUDLEY'S hospital trust is on the look out for new governors.

There are vacancies in the public constituencies of Central Dudley and the Rest of the West Midlands. Those elected will sit on the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust's council of governors, which oversees health care.

People can find out more about being a governor by contacting Helen Board on 01384 321124 or email foundationmembers@dgh.nhs.uk

Patient panel is being launched

A NEW patient panel is being launched in Wyre Forest to give people the chance to have their say on the district's health services.

Members are being recruited for the Patient & Public Involvement scheme. It is being set up by the Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Group, which is holding a public meeting on February 5 between 9am and noon at Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. Contact Harpreet Gill on 01562 513559.

College campus to hold open day

HALESOWEN College will be holding an open day on January 26 when it will be promoting its new free bus routes and £3 million block 10.

The block was commissioned to house travel and tourism, a veterinary nursing, an active learning zone and facilities for students with learning difficulties. The open day is at the Whittingham Road site runs from 10am to 4pm.

Two watches are stolen in burglary

BURGLARS have stolen two watches from a house in Blakedown, near Kidderminster.

The garage door was forced to gain entry and jewellery stolen included a £250 ladies Gucci watch, and a £100 Guess watch. Witnesses or anyone with information should call police on 101 quoting incident 616-s-140113.

Rotary raise cash

STOURBRIDGE Rotary Club is celebrating after raising £2,850 for charity during a collection over the Christmas at Morrisons supermarket in Stallings Lane, Kingswinford.

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NEWS

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I WANTED a DVD of a classic drama series. Even a dinosaur like me knows there are two ways to do this. The first is to get up, get the car started, drive into town, find a parking place, buy a parking ticket, make your way to the DVD shop, avoiding the Big Issue sellers and charity muggers, find the DVD is out of stock and ask the shop staff if they can get you a copy. If they can, then you repeat the entire procedure a few days later and pay way over the odds for the DVD, plus £4 or so for the parking. The other way is to go online, buy the DVD at eBay for half the high-street price and get it delivered to your door by an obliging Portuguese courier who calls you Mr Road-ez. The wonder is not that HMV have gone bust but that their chain of town-centre shops lasted so long. The high street as we know it is doomed and the sooner we start turning department stores into apartments and houses, the better.

□□□□□□□□

MEANWHILE, a reader who enjoys the old-fashioned shopping experience tells me in one store he was invited to "pre-order" a book. He muses, what is the difference between pre-ordering and simply ordering?

□□□□□□□□

HERE we go again. Yet another reader joins the growing ranks of people who, soon after encountering the NHS, get unsolicited contacts from private companies. She's a middle-aged lady who discovered at a routine blood test just before Christmas that her cholesterol was alarmingly high. Sure enough, three weeks later she was contacted by a health screening company which had already fixed a local appointment for her. She says it's either "a massive coincidence or something very fishy." Having had dozens of similar reports from readers, I think we can dismiss the coincidence line. My suspicion is that some employees of the NHS routinely sell private information.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Community champion Elsie dies at age of 78

Sadie receives police honour

A GIRL from Cradley Heath has been honoured for her community spirit after she looked after a three-year-old found wandering alone in a park.

Sadie Coates, aged 15, received her award from the West Midlands Police Authority.

She got a young persons award after finding the child in Haden Hill Park in April and telephoning police with exact details, including location and a description, and staying with the child until police arrived.

Pc Andrew Cleaver said: "We have spoken to Sadie's parents and headteacher who are very proud of her actions."

"She acted in a most mature manner and fully deserves recognition."

"She prevented the child from any serious harm as the park has two ponds and several exits onto main busy roads."

"She looked after the child until we arrived and located the parents."

Sadie was one of a number of members of the public and police officers to receive awards for community spirit and bravery.



Sadie Coates, of Cradley Heath, receives her award from the Chief Constable, Christopher Sims

A COMMUNITY champion who helped run a senior citizens club in Halesowen for 25 years has died aged 78.

Tributes have been paid to Elsie Maybury by her family and members of the Senior Citizens Drop In Centre, Andrew Road, Mrs Maybury was central to the success of the centre during her 15 years as co-ordinator.

She was also a long standing member of St John the Baptist Church and was active in numerous community activities.

Friends from the centre nominated her for the Mayor of Dudley's Civic Awards in 2011.

Belle Vale councillor Jill Nicholls said: "We want to keep the centre going in Elsie's memory, as she has given so much of her life to looking after people here."

Mrs Maybury was raised in Quinton by parents Jessie and Tom Weston, who ran his own butchers shop in the high street.

The family, including Mrs Maybury's four brothers, moved to Peckingham Street, Halesowen, when Mr Weston worked at Hollies Butchers.

After leaving school, she worked as a nurse for nine years at Hayley Green Hospital in Halesowen, and Dudley Guest Hospital.

Mrs Maybury met her future husband Jeff through her brother Tom, known by everyone as Lewis, who were both in the Royal Navy. The couple were married



Elsie Maybury - tributes

at St John the Baptist Church in November 1956 but were forced to spend the first nine months of married life apart after Mr Maybury was stationed abroad as a seaman with the Navy.

They eventually set up home in Hagley Road, Halesowen, and had three children - Ian, Mary and Catherine.

They also have five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"She touched so many people's lives," said Mr Maybury, 79.

Mrs Maybury died last month, and more than 170 people attended a service in her memory at St John the Baptist Church.

Rubbish dumpers handed out fines

THREE people have landed court bills totalling £2,120 for waste offences in the Dudley borough.

All three were prosecuted by Dudley Council at Dudley Magistrates' Court.

Lana Cherrington, 24, of Occupation Street, Dudley, failed to remove a skip full of rubbish from outside her home last May, following complaints it had been there for several months.

She was served with a notice ordering her to move it but failed to act. Magistrates fined her £500 and she was also told to pay £290 costs, £180 compensation and £15 victim surcharge.

Failed

In a separate case, Lindsey Forsyth, aged 26, of Hill Street, Netherton, was taken to court because of the amount of rubbish in her back garden.

She failed to move it in July last year despite a legal notice. She was fined £500 and ordered to pay £290 costs, £180 compensation and £15 victim surcharge.

In a third case, 38-year-old Edward Stewart, of Vicarage Prospect, Dudley, admitted dumping waste on the car park of the former White Lion pub, Netherton.

He was caught by council officers last July last.

He was given a 12-month conditional discharge and ordered to pay £150 costs.

All three appeared in court on January 10.

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Planning warning to bar bosses

COUNCIL bosses have issued a warning to bar owners to ensure they have the appropriate planning permission for their businesses.

Dudley Council's planning enforcement team, which works to ensure premises comply with planning regulations, has sent out the warning following a recent prosecution.

A Kingswinford bar owner who flouted enforcement notices on three occasions was landed with a court bill in excess of £6,000 when he appeared before Wolverhampton Crown Court last month.

Following a three-day trial, Jimmy Lee was fined £2,000 and £4,000 costs after being found guilty of failing to comply with an enforcement notice on three occasions.

At the time Lee was running the Alter Ego bar in Kingswinford High Street. He had consent to run a restaurant or café but the enforcement team were informed that the premises was being run as a wine bar.

Have your say

RESIDENTS are being asked to have their say on housing services in the Dudley borough to help shape future developments. The council wants views on a draft housing strategy published as part of consultations. A summary of the strategy and a questionnaire are available on the council's database at www.dudley.gov.uk/community/

Health bosses apologise for failure over baby tragedy



Gemma Peters and Liam Greenfield with pictures of their tragic baby Brook

DUDLEY health chiefs have apologised to the parents of a baby girl who died after care "fell below the high standard" expected at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital. Gemma Peters and Liam Greenfield, from Netherton, had criticised staff following complications during the birth of their daughter Brook.

The newborn had suffered brain damage and died three days after she was born on July 14, 2011.

Her parents have now taken out a medical negligence case against the hospital, which claims there were "failings in care which led to death."

Chief executive Paula Clark said a thorough investigation had taken place and "lessons have been learned" following the death of the newborn.

She added: "First and foremost we would like to offer our most sincere condolences to Gemma Peters on the sad loss of her baby, Brook.

"Safety is always our top priority and we offer our heartfelt apologies that the care provided in this case fell below the high standard we provide each day for our patients.

Midwives

"A thorough investigation was carried out and lessons have been learned and appropriate actions taken to help ensure a tragic incident such as this does not happen again."

Miss Peters, aged 26, claimed she was left in agony as her baby's head became stuck for more than an hour-and-a-half during the birth and by the time midwives delivered Brook, she was floppy and unresponsive.

She said the umbilical cord was knotted around her neck.

Brook was transferred to the neonatal unit where, despite the best efforts of doctors, it was found she had suffered irreversible brain damage.

"I was distraught and upset and couldn't



Brook died after suffering brain damage

believe what had happened as the pregnancy had gone so well up until then," said Miss Peters, of Lodge Crescent.

The couple said they were advised that nothing more could be done and the devastating decision was taken to switch off life support.

The couple have lodged a formal complaint with the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

NEWS in brief

Leisure centre is upgrading lockers

NEW lockers are being installed at Stourbridge's Crystal Leisure Centre as part of a £33,000 project.

Dudley Council is investing in new token operated lockers at the Bell Street centre.

The leisure pool and locker area will be closed from January 21 to 24 and will reopen on January 25 once the installation of the lockers has been completed. Other facilities at the centre, including the 25-metre pool, will be open as usual.

City visited by travel students

HALESOWEN College travel and tourism students visited Dublin to find out more about the holiday and short break industry.

It was part of their studies to plan and take part in a successful visit. It will also help them prepare for their next piece of work exploring airlines and airports.

Travel and tourism lecturer, Laura Lee, said: "All the students really enjoyed the visit and learnt a lot."

Panto to shine

TICKETS are available for a theatre group's pantomime starting next week. Startime Variety will be performing Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp at the Cornbow Centre in Halesowen from January 30 to February 2. Tickets £10.

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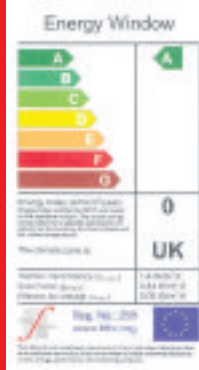
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NEWS

Mayor's awards ready to mark 10th anniversary

THE Mayor Dudley's Civic Awards, which recognises those who have contributed most to their communities, will celebrate its 10th anniversary.

The awards give people the chance to highlight those working tirelessly in their communities.

To mark the milestone a new category has been added - the William Shenstone award for environment, in honour of the famous landscape gardener, who created The Leasowes park in Halesowen.

It will join the four other categories which are also named after the borough's greats, including Duncan Edwards award for sport, the Cedric Hardwicke award for arts, the Frank Foley award for community spirit and the Thomas Attwood award for education.

There will also be a sixth trophy up for grabs, the Mayor's Award, which will be decided by a public vote next month. Mayor, Councillor Melvyn Mottram will nominate four people for this award.

Last year's winner was Ros Bratt-Wynton, who helped set up the Georgina Unit at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital in 1998. She has since helped raise millions of pounds through the appeal fund.

A judging panel will decide the other four categories. Nominations for this year's awards are now open and people will be able to put names forward until February 18.

Councillor Mottram said: "As Mayor of Dudley I've been fortunate to meet people who do amazing things."

People can nominate online at www.dudley.gov.uk or pick up a form from libraries this week.

Folklore and traditions

DR COLIN HARRIS will speak about folklore, customs and traditions at the next meeting of Wordsley History Society on February 14.

It will be held at 7.30pm in the Community Centre, Wordsley Green. The society welcomes new members and visitors, at a cost of £2, including refreshments.

Neep into enjoy night



Halesowen College students Sarah Fullwood, Nicole Wassell and Victoria Park prepare for the Burns' Night hosted by the hospitality department.

HAGGIS, tatties and neeps will be on the menu when students at Halesowen College's training restaurant host traditional Burns' Night festivities.

There will be two evenings of Scottish food and live entertainment on January 23 and 24. It will include bagpipes piping in the haggis, followed by the reading of The Ode to a Haggis and a toast.

A sumptuous Scottish menu will be prepared by the catering vocational students, which will include the traditional cullen skink, haggis with neeps and champit tatties

served with a glass of whisky. Victoria Pask, aged 16, a BTEC Hospitality student at the College, said: "Our event nights are always very successful and well attended and Burns' night is no exception."

"We are offering a great night out at a very reasonable price, please come along and join us for a traditional taste of Scotland."

People should arrive at 6.45pm. Call 0121 602 7851 or 0121 602 7777 ext 211 or email restaurant@halesowen.ac.uk for tickets.

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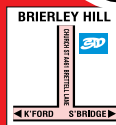
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NEWS

Archive's next phase



Dudley councillor Judy Foster, Councillor Khurshid Ahmed and Alex Patrick-Smith

The new £6million archives and local history centre in Dudley has moved into its next phase.

Ketley Brick, based in Pensnett, has been selected to supply all of the striking blue bricks being used at the Tipton Road site.

The building, which is on track to be completed this summer, will house IT and public Wi-Fi services, education and conference rooms, a rare books library and research area, a well-equipped search room and car parking. It will also offer activities for people, local community groups, schools and colleges.

Contractor G F Tomlinson began work on the centre in April last year.

It is being part funded by the European Regional Development Fund, as part of the redevelopment of the Castle Hill area of Dudley.

Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, said: "We are delighted to be supporting a long standing local business."

Alex Patrick-Smith, managing director, of Ketley Brick, said: "We are pleased to be associated with such a prestigious local project."

Vandals may have ripped up memorial to Michelle

A TREE planted as a memorial to a mother who died after a battle with cancer has been torn up by its roots and stolen, bringing new heartbreak to her family.

It is thought the memorial, evergreen oak, planted in a Stourbridge park for 42-year-old Michelle Lockley, was either destroyed by vandals or taken by thieves wanting it for their garden.

Michelle's aunt, Sharon Gilson-Pinches, said: "It's so despicable and I can't understand the mentality of anyone who could do this - the whole family is extremely upset and angry."

"The plaque clearly stated that this tree was in loving memory of a youngish woman who only passed away 12 months ago."

Mrs Lockley, of Stamford Road, Brierley Hill, died in Stourbridge's Mary Stevens Hospice in November 2011.

Soon afterwards, the tree was planted near the bandstand in Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge, where Mrs Lockley enjoyed going with her sons, Kyle, now 21, and Rhys, who is 19.

Mrs Sharon Gilson-Pinches, 53, who lives in Wellington, Telford, said: "I think someone may have taken a fancy to the tree for their own garden but even if it was uprooted and burned by vandals, rather than



Michelle Lockley

stolen, it is of no comfort to the family."

Sgt Keith Pagan said: "Our inquiries suggest the tree was possibly removed by vandals at the same time as some fencing was set alight in the bandstand area of the park on December 11. We believe the remains of the tree were found the following morning."

Mrs Lockley was diagnosed with bowel cancer in 2007. After treatment, she was given the all-clear but cancer returned, in her liver and lungs.

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LETTERS

Conned over tax contributions

A NEW year and another new pension scheme is introduced, this time called a Workplace pension.

We are told that we who are "all in it together" are to receive a standard pension, as the present system is too complicated. Funny that, when Graduated pensions were introduced in 1961 it wasn't too complicated to take the contributions from our wages and then in 1975 we had SERPS, once again

based on the principle of paying more in if you earned more, and so having a bigger pension.

Then we had S2P introduced in 2002, and so the payments carried on being made into this imaginary pot which we hoped would give us a decent retirement after almost 50 years of paying in. The pot is actually a bottomless pit, the money we have paid is not saved for us at all, but used for whatever the gov-

ernment of the time wants to do with it - it is just another tax, and worse it is a giant con trick which most people are taken in by. All that extra money should be there for us as we paid it in good faith. No government of whichever party has the right to take contributions from our wages to spend on other than what we were told it was for.

RON GWILLIAMS
Salcombe Drive, Brierley Hill

Animal welfare the top priority

ALTHOUGH the new features planned for Dudley Zoo are probably a good idea, I think some considerations should also be given to its residents. Larger or at least enhanced enclosures, especially for the big cats and bear, could make a significant difference to these animals who spend their lives there. Obviously the zoo needs to make a profit but creatures' welfare should be a priority.

ROSEMARY DODD
Townsend Avenue
Sedgley

What happened?

WHILST I have always known Wolverhampton was a hive of industry, until I read the Festival of Britain (1951) memorial booklet in Beattie's Heritage Room, I was astounded to what extent it contributed to the nation's wealth at that time. Villiers, Goodyears, ECC, Courtaulds, Star Aluminium, Brookhouse, Gibbons, Butlers, Boulton Paul, Qualcast, Chubb, Ever Ready, Meadows, Guy Motors and Turner are just a sample of the major companies - whatever happened?

NORMAN NEWCOMBE
Underley Close
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LETTERS to the Editor

POST

Halesowen Chronicle, Chronicle Editorial, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

E-MAIL

Dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

Thank you from the bottom of my heart

MAY I please thank the kind person who handed my key into the butcher's shop by the crossing in Sedgley, just before Christmas week.

A kind gentleman told me he had seen someone pick my key up on the crossing, he saw me looking for my key in my handbag, by the time my sister and I dashed back the person had gone.

Inside my car were seven wreathes to take to Bilston Cemetery for members of our family, this I do every Christmas, and to me it is important and my first priority. I live in Shropshire and had gone to Sedgley first to take one to St Chad's Church in Sedgley for my brother.

After asking my brother-in-law, who I telephoned to ask the best way to go about it, he suggested I go to the shops that were near the crossing (prior to calling him, I had been to the police station in Sedgley, where you ring a buzzer, and a voice answers, so that was of no use, we have lost the old and best way by speaking to someone on the counter).

Luckily the first call was the butcher's, and yes the good samaritan had handed my key in, so after nearly two hours of panic, we continued our journey. I would like to thank that kind person from the bottom of my heart.

MRS REGINE PARKINSON,
Priorslee Village, Telford

Parking fees threaten town

WHAT on earth are the councillors trying to do to Cradley Heath? Not content with ripping the heart out of a thriving town by allowing Tesco to open a large supermarket, they are now making the car parks into pay-and-display! This will only have one result: more people using the supermarket (where the parking is free) and fewer people in the town. The market will be lucky to survive, as will those shops still trading so any monetary gain from parking fees will be offset by loss of business rates. Any more bright ideas?

MR S TURLEY
Sandringham Road
Wordsley

Wonderful person

ON Tuesday of last week, near to Sedgley post office, I slipped on ice and fell between two cars. A young lady pushing a toddler came to help me. This kind person, who I believe lived locally was a nurse at New Cross Hospital, helped me get into my car. She also posted my letters. Can anyone help me to find who this wonderful person is?

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NEWS

Slumped bus driver had drunk a bottle of vodka

Shop to support hospice



Business manager Simon Henwood and Gail Phillips, the senior shops manager, in the Mary Stevens Hospice shop, Brierley Hill High Street

VOLUNTEERS have celebrated the opening of a new charity store supporting Mary Stevens Hospice.

The premises in Brierley Hill High Street to complement its original store. The new shop will stock a range of designer clothing and goods donated from supporters.

The hospice will continue to keep open its other store in the High Street for furniture and homeware items. Simon Hendwood, from the

Stourbridge-based hospice, said the new store will be more accessible to shoppers.

"This store is only on a single level making it easier for people to get around," he said.

"We are really pleased to have opened the store. It will sell some different styles to the existing store and will also be fed with lines from the distribution centre at the rear of the market."

A BUS driver from Lye who was two and a half times the drink-drive limit after consuming a bottle of vodka the day before her morning shift has received a suspended prison sentence.

Sheryl Williams had not eaten anything for six days before she drove a Denis Dart Bus around Cannock for almost three hours on January 2.

She began work at 6.30am and was said to be "in a good mood" by her manager at Hanson's bus company, but by 9.20am police had received a report that a bus driver had collapsed while driving.

The only passenger on Williams' bus, which was in Mill Lane at the time, had phoned an ambulance after Williams stopped the bus and was ill by the roadside.

The 43-year-old, of High Street, was taken to Russells Hall Hospital and after being breathalysed was arrested by police, who measured she had 91 microgrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath.

Sorry

Mr John Peel told Cannock Magistrates' Court: "She said she had not eaten for six days and had consumed a small bottle of vodka on January 1. She said she was very sorry for being over the limit and is very disappointed in herself."

She has since lost her job at Hanson's.

Mr Robert Perry, defending, said she had never been in trouble before during her five-and-a-half year employment with the bus firm and called the incident "a moment of madness".

"Two years ago her partner suffered a stroke and she continued doing 12 hour shifts while caring for him at home," he added. "She had an argument with her partner and had a drink."

"She feels extremely remorseful for what's happened. She'd come to the end of her tether and this was clearly a one-off."

Williams pleaded guilty to driving when over the limit and was given an eight-week prison sentence, suspended for 12 months.

She was told to do 60 hours of unpaid work and pay £165 costs.

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MEMORY LANE



Tipping the Slag – a painting of industrial Black Country by Edwin Butler Bayliss (Picture: Christopher Bayliss)



Children playing on coal waste at The Lunt, Bilston, in the 1920s (Picture: Wolverhampton Archives)

'An angry sea of black shale'

THE work of the great Black Country painter Edwin Butler Bayliss now on display in Wolverhampton gives us an idea of what it must have felt like to look out over the pre-war landscape of the area.

In particular, it depicts a scene laid waste by mining and quarrying. Air pollution of the Black Country is well known – it's how many believe it got its name. But the long-term abuse of the land surface is less widely understood.

"Unlike anything else in England" is how the historian William Hoskins described it in the 1950s – and he had travelled about a bit.

He likened it to a strange desert, "a black, tormented Sahara... the aftermath of robber-exploitation of the earth".

Ten years before, while planning post war Black Country housing estates, the architect Charles Reilly poetically described the area as 'an angry sea of black shale'.

But all this devastation wasn't a product of the 1950s or the 1940s.

We can follow the trail of evidence

by Paul Quigley

Landscape archaeologist, the distinctly black country network

further back. In the early 1930s a planner wrote that the Black Country contained "twenty square miles where almost the only land not built up is covered by the refuse from disused pits".

Older evidence, in the photos of the 1920s for example, like the one here of kids playing on coal waste in Bilston, tells us that the state of dereliction has roots going further back.

Marked

In fact the problem of derelict land in the Black Country goes deep into the previous century.

One way we know this is a recent English Heritage study of the area – the Historic Landscape Characterisation.

This uses historic maps to trace the extent of dereliction. The map here is based on the study.

It shows the area of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, and Wolverhampton marked with all the derelict land in

1939. At that point there was 38 square kilometres of it (14 square miles) in a pattern which traced the whole South Staffordshire coalfield.

This might be shocking enough (it was probably the most intense concentration of derelict land in Britain at the time).

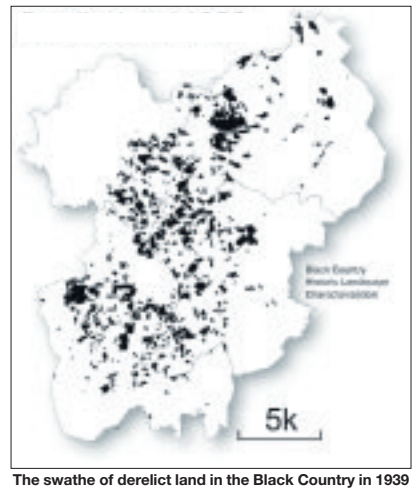
But the study reveals something else. It shows that nearly two-thirds of this neglected land had been in this state for at least 40 years.

Some were even older – two fifths of the waste land which existed in 1939 had lain around in that state since 1885 or before.

The fact is that, in the mid 19th century the unplanned rush to exploit mineral and other resources had brought the small area of the Black Country into a position of international economic significance. But it left a long-lasting scar on the local environment which arguably is still visible in the area today.

Edwin Butler Bayliss: Poet Painter of the Black Country is at Wolverhampton Art Gallery until April 27.

More information on derelict land in the Black Country is available at <http://distinctlyblackcountry.org.uk>



The swathe of derelict land in the Black Country in 1939

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our work is of the highest possible standards."

So the message is simple, if you're having difficulty finding the means to heat your home to an adequate standard, Dyson Energy Services will put in place those measures to improve the thermal performance of your property and reduce the cost of your fuel bills. It's an obligation from your Energy Supplier to deliver primarily new heating systems and basic insulation measures, such as cavity wall and loft insulation, under the ECO scheme.

Tony Hardiman goes on to say "We don't know how long the scheme will be available for so it's vitally important that those households that think they may be eligible should call us straight away to avoid disappointment – it's free and could make all the difference between a cold home – or a warm one."

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NEWS

Nick is back in the fray with venture



Managing Directors Nigel Morris and Nick Shutt in the warehouse at JG Foods, Kingswinford

NICK Shutt had planned a nice, relaxing early retirement when he sold his business in 2008.

The business, Julian Graves, had been sold on a number of times, but when Holland & Barratt bought it that year, the businessman from Bewdley decided to put his feet up.

"I went into retirement, spent some time with my feet up and I bought myself a sit-on lawnmower, as you do," said the 57-year-old from Bewdley.

"But when my old company was put into administration in July 2012, I thought it was maybe time to get somebody to sit on the lawnmower for me and to get back to work."

So JG Foods was created a month later and by mid-December had 10 shops open and had sold £500,000 in produce. The business, from its distribution base on the Pensnett Trading Estate, Kingswinford, sells dried fruit, nuts and confectionery at Grape Tree outlets across the country. The distribution centre employs 40 and Mr Shutt said he hopes to open at least 20 more stores during the course of this year. The first of these will be in Bedford with negotiations underway in Sutton Coldfield and Royal Leamington Spa.

Mr Shutt, who runs the company along with business partner Nigel Morris, said the company's short-term aim was for 50 shops.

Area plagued by 16 metal raids in just two months

A PRIMARY school and neighbouring homes have been hit by metal thieves who have struck 16 times in the last two months.

Hurst Hill Primary School in Coseley, has been attacked five times since November. Police are now warning residents to listen out for scratching or knocking noises – and check them out. Police have upped patrols after lead flashing was ripped from roofs and windows across the area, in some cases causing thousands of pounds of damage.

A 23-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of theft after £15,000 of air conditioning units and copper piping were stolen from a house in Whitehouse Street recently.

He was questioned by officers and has been released on police bail pending further enquiries.

Sgt James Jones, who leads the Coseley East neighbourhood police team, said: "Since November we've seen 16 metal thefts across the area and virtually all relate to lead flashing."

"Generally, metal theft has fallen by more than 60 per cent over the past year but it seems we're having a spat in this one area."

"We've upped our patrols

and are targeting known thieves who may operate across this part of the Dudley borough, but we also want people living and working in Coseley and Hurst Hill to keep their eyes peeled.

"Anyone stealing flashing from windows or a roof would be fairly exposed to people driving or walking by, and it is likely to be noisy for people inside."

"If you happen to hear a scratching or knocking noise then check it out."

The crimes at Hurst Hill, in Paul Street, span from November 7 through to mid-December, with the thieves stealing lead from the roof on each occasion.

Sgt Jones added that some people thought it was a victimless crime but putting it right could cost thousands.

by Louise Jew

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NEWS

Schools pool resources in education federation

TWO schools in Kinver have joined forces as a federation for them to share resources.

Foley Infant and Brindley Heath Junior schools have linked up under the partnership.

They share one headteacher - Jason Willets - and a single board of governors. Each school has kept its own identity and is responsible for managing its own budget.

They also each have their own deputy headteacher while Mr Willets works across both sites on a daily basis.

A business manager has been appointed to deal with premises, staffing and financial management - a position which neither school could have sustained without the formal collaboration.

Mr Willets said: "Our federation has many benefits for children, parents and staff - consistency of approach towards teaching and learning in order to raise standards; the appointment of the business manager which allows me, as headteacher, to focus my time and efforts purely on teaching and learning for the benefit of all the children and the consistency of all policies and procedures across both schools.

"Ultimately, we feel our children, parents and staff receive all the benefits of a primary school education whilst retaining the advantages of individual infant and junior settings. The governing body of Kinver Primary Federation has been established from parents and staff from each school and members of the community.

The Federation, which is a formal and legal agreement between the two schools, came into force on January 1.

Therapy pets are wanted

A CHARITY which takes dogs and cats into care homes for comfort and companionship is appealing for more pets in Stourbridge and Dudley.

For further information on Pets As Therapy visit www.petsastherapy.org or call 01384 378590.

Calendar claims Beacon



Beryl Wilkes with the 2013 Coseley Calendar featuring Sedgley Beacon

A CALENDAR is claiming a Black Country landmark as its own in what could be a controversial move.

Coseley Calendar - an annual labour of love by historian Beryl Wilkes and her son John - lays claim to Grade II monument Sedgley Beacon and the hill for its front cover. It reveals that, after Coseley gained independence from Sedgley, in whose district it used to lie, the beacon moved with it.

"I won't stick my neck out as far as saying it should be called Coseley Beacon but it is just over the border into our district," said Beryl. Mrs Wilkes, aged 79, of The Paddock, Coseley, has been producing the Coseley Calendar since 2000 with her son.

It can be bought for £4.25, with £1.10 for postage and packing, from Movie Magic, Castle Street, Regards on Bramford Estate, Lynne's Flower Cabin, Summerhill Road, and Hurst Hill Post Office.

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Flats plan for offices approved

A SET of old offices in Cradley Heath will be transformed into homes for professionals after being granted permission by council planning bosses.

Under a delegated decision by Sandwell Council the terraced style building in Court Street, Old Hill, which is currently owned by MHS Alarm Services Ltd, will be transformed into a multi occupancy home designed to meet a need for the areas professionals.

It will have a secure parking bay and eight cycle spaces for bicycles.

Architecture Design Studio, Hodgehill, Birmingham aims to change the office space downstairs into bedrooms with living facilities.

The upstairs apartments will be turned into bedrooms with kitchenettes.

There will be two self contained flats to the rear of the property and three bedrooms with living facilities.

Bedtime story

CHILDREN are being invited to dress in their pyjamas for a bedtime story at Cradley Library. Halesowen author Lee Howell will be reading his book Millie's Magic Bed on January 31, from 6pm to 6.45pm. It tells of a girl who got taken on a magical journey to Buckingham Palace following the Royal Wedding.

If you have any news stories or pictures from this area let us know.

Email: tom.mason@expressandstar.co.uk or call 01902 319466

Volunteers call to turn church ground into memorial orchard

THE vicar of a Cradley church is looking for volunteers to help bring the dream of a restored churchyard memorial orchard to life.

The memorial garden will be planted with wild flowers and blossoming fruit trees and is designed to allow families to commemorate their families.

The idea suggested by the vicar, the Rev Kathryn Leclézio, came after an area of land was gifted to the church by local firm Hammersleys was deemed to steep for burials.

She said: "I've not been at the church long but local people have told me that they feel its disgraceful the way the it has been left."

"Many of the graves are no longer cared for as families have moved away or can no longer take care of them."

As part of the plans the churchyard will be cleared and restored after and already local firms and people as well as the Princes Trust have got involved to help.

A team of volunteers, who meet on the first Saturday of every month, have begun

by Tom Mason

some of the hard work clearing weeds and brambles.

"We would love more volunteers to come help our already dedicated green spaces team, people make the difference on a project like this, a lot more can be done in a day by 20 rather than 10 people," she added.

The church also plans to create a picnic area at the top of the field to be used by nurseries and groups.

It hopes to make St Peter's jams and preserves with sister church, St Peter's Lopal.

If you would like to help with the restoration of the churchyard call Ms Leclézio on 01384 411383 or the Green Spaces Co-ordinator on 01384 413942.

'Prison camp' fears on scheme

A SENIOR councillor has objected to plans for a four-storey retirement village in Cradley, saying it would resemble a prison camp. Councillor Tim Crumpton said he was concerned the development proposed by Midland Heart would dominate the skyline. He said the complex could resemble a "prison camp" because of security fencing which would be put up around it. The scheme is for 130 apartments at the site of the former Cradley High School, off Homer Hill Road.



Head chef Mohammed Asim from Balti Licious in Cradley Heath

Cooking up a hot night for charity

A CHARITY curry night at the grand opening of an Indian restaurant has helped raise several hundred pounds for Children In Need.

Balti Licious on the Halesowen Road, Cradley Heath, is run by cousins Mohammed Kabir and Mohammed Asim, who opened for their first night on Monday.

The restaurant was shown to the public following a £20,000 revamp of a former pizza shop that included new furnishings, décor and kitchen equipment.

The pair, who have owned similar enterprises in Birmingham before, managed to raise more than £300 for Children in Need by donating the evening's proceeds to the charity.

Mohammed Kabir said: "It was fantastic, it couldn't have gone better considering the conditions."

"We were still a little disappointed that we didn't raise more. In the past we have held similar events and raised more than £900, but I think the poor weather affected it."

Choir ready to sing out for Rangers

A CHOIR will be raising the roof with a performance to help send children on a trip to Australia.

Cradley Heath Male Voice Choir will be signing a mixture of hymns, classical songs and contemporary hits at the Salvation Army hall, Meredith Street, on February 9.

The money raised from ticket sales will be used to pay for eight members of the Netherton District Rangers, a group affiliated with the Girl Guides, to go to Australia at the end of March.

The girls, aged 15-19, will be meeting up with Guide groups in Australia as part of their Commonwealth Award.

The concert will start at 7.30pm.

Tickets cost £5 and are available at the Salvation Army's coffee shop, or by calling 07860 644 981 or 07522 525 654.

Donations are a boost

MORE than 300 items of clothing were donated by staff and customers over Christmas at the Sainsbury's store in Blackheath.

Now the Beauty for Ashes charity is appealing for anyone who can give an hour or two of their time for the counselling service in Waterfall Lane, Cradley, Heath.

Contact the volunteers on 0121 559 7443.

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COMMERCIAL FEATURE



Purpose-built art and design centre, in Brierley Hill – state-of-the-art facilities complement outstanding teaching

Exciting merger set to offer more choice

Existing and new students at Stourbridge College can look forward to a great year in 2013 writes principal Lynette Cutting

THIS year, Stourbridge College, the region's best performing Further Education college, celebrates a successful Ofsted inspection and announces plans to merge with Birmingham Metropolitan College.

A recent Ofsted inspection judges us good for our overall effectiveness, outcomes for learners, quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the effectiveness of our leadership and management – with art & design achieving outstanding.

Stourbridge College offers students the chance to achieve significantly higher than average success rates, offers excellent added value for its wide range of courses and provides a great platform to be heard through its vibrant student voice community.

The exciting merger will offer new opportunities for students with increased investment in facilities as well as improved progression links with international employers such as Samsung and BMW.

We've also enhanced courses by creating centres of excellence which are supported by strong employer links, providing education, training and support for students which they will be unable to get anywhere else.



Knockout – Gemma Small has joined Stourbridge College's boxing academy

Opening doors for you

THE next open event takes place on Saturday, January 26, between 10am and 2pm.

Go along and see for yourself what courses are available, what kind of facilities are on offer and find out more about the merger.

If you want to get straight into work, the college offers employability skills to help you get a job.

It has also got lots to offer in construction and the built environment, helping you build solid foundations in the con-

struction trades and an energetic array of sports academies including football (male and female), rugby, boxing, golf and equine as well as a range of apprenticeships.

The college is recruiting now, so book your place.

See the website and eProspectus for online course information and entry requirements: www.stourbridge.ac.uk or contact the college on 01384 344364 for more information.

On course to win with centres of excellence

● Be outstanding at creative

Having just joined the National Skills Academy for Creative & Cultural, our Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries offers an exciting opportunity to be part of the renowned creative community at our new campus in Brierley Hill.

Students develop their practical skills in excellent studio areas where state-of-the-art facilities complement the outstanding teaching and provision of courses – some of which have achieved 100 per cent success rates. We are the only local college to have been invited by the University of the Arts London to use their awarding body for our Diploma courses in Art & Design.

● Good at A Levels

If you're counting on a future in accounting, want to benefit in business or picture yourself doing photography, A Level students can expect to achieve AS Level success rates which are 10 per cent higher than anywhere else in the country, with A2 Level achieving five per cent above the national average.

● Function better

We also offer extra help with maths, English and IT depending upon what course you choose, regardless of whether you've got GCSEs in the subjects. It's a proven fact that this helps you pass exams.

● The right hair and beauty balance

Our recent partnership with BodyBalance means we have a hair and beauty academy that offers a new range of courses for 16 to 18-year-olds as well as people aged 19 and over, including apprenticeships.



A partnership with BodyBalance has helped to create the college's hair and beauty academy

Stourbridge College

open event

Saturday 26th January 2013

10.00am - 2.00pm

Where Do You Need to Be

For A Levels, Vocational Courses, Centres of Excellence, Hair & Beauty and Sports Academies

Hagley Road Centre, Hagley Road, Stourbridge, DY8 1QU

Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries

Art & Design Centre, Venture Way, Brierley Hill, DY5 1RG

Centre of Excellence for Construction & Building Services

Advanced Technology Centre, Waterfront Business Park, Brierley Hill, DY5 1LX

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CLUB NEWS

WI meats up with butcher

Guest draws on his experience as artist

BILBROOK WI

CHRISTMAS festivities all went off as planned. The group carol service at St. Pauls Church, Coven was well attended and two members from each group were invited to participate.

The Christmas meal at Essington Fruit Farm was an excellent night, the food was up to its usual high standard and there was much hilarity over the quiz and the raffle where everyone gets a prize. Thanks go to president Julie Hammersley for organising the evening.

Finally at the group's own Christmas party, members were entertained by The Codsall Singers who were all on top form. Another successful evening.

For the January meeting our speaker was Codsall butcher Alan Bennett, who told of his early days as a young boy when he first went into the butchering trade under the wing of Gill's Butchers.

He has become well-known for his award-winning flavoured sausages, his latest being 'The Bucks Fizz' and his award was presented to him by Cheryl Baker one of the singers in the band of the same name.

The ladies finished the evening enjoying a few samples of sausage and pork pie. This was followed by refreshments and the raffle. The first prize was won by Mrs Bennett who had accompanied her husband for the evening.



Speaker Geoff Tristram with chairman Mary Jones, right and speaker's secretary Pauline Handley with other committee members

CHAIRMAN Mary Jones welcomed 39 members and one visitor to the January meeting at the Kingfisher Hotel, Wall Heath when the management kindly treated everyone to a glass of sparkling wine to celebrate the New Year.

A three-course lunch was followed by the speaker Geoff Tristram, an artist and cartoonist. His talk was entitled Confessions of an Artist, which he illustrated with slides taken of his paintings and amusing stories.

Seven years ago he started writing and has now published 10 very amusing books,

DUDLEY SOUTH LADIES LUNCHEON CLUB

which members were able to purchase. The February meeting will be the AGM, in March Peter Shelly talks about "A Handful of Straw" and in April Shirley Thompson, notary public - a local solicitor. A coach outing in the spring is under discussion.

Fun night kicks off new year

THE first meeting of the New Year was a social evening with games and quizzes.

Geography was put to the test and another teaser consisted of photographs of famous celebrities. While some were puzzling over these, others were playing

TRYSULL & SEISDON WI

scrabble, dominoes or connect four.

Before the answers were given, the ladies stopped for refreshments. There was an assortment of savoury and

sweet nibbles and tea or coffee. Prizes were then handed out to the winners.

Next month's competition is a Valentine Heart, any medium and Malcolm Astley the club, which meets on Thursday February 14 in the Village Hall, Trysull at 7.30pm

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After three spectacular sell-out shows at London's O2 Arena in November, Robbie Williams is to perform at Manchester's Etihad Stadium next June.

One of the world's most successful recording artists, with a record 17 Brit Awards, 10 UK number one albums and seven UK number one singles including Angels and Millennium, the Take That star is expected to perform tracks from his recent album Take the Crown, which went straight in at number one along with its lead single Candy, the fast-selling male artist single of 2012.

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When Capital Financial Management, the established Debt Advisory Service in Halesowen, learned of the number of unscrupulous claims management companies misrepresenting consumers entitlements to reclaim Payment Protection Insurance they decided to do something about it. Simon Bancroft, Company Director and non-practising barrister said; “We have been advising local residents in respect of Debt Problems for a number of years. Many of our clients were persuaded to take out PPI when applying for loans and credit cards and were often told that they would not be granted the facility unless they took

out PPI. In many cases consumers are not even aware that PPI was added to their loans. Unfortunately however, many companies have set up on the back of the mis-selling scandal some of which have adopted the approach of cold calling and making false representations”.

Often recorded messages are played to consumers promising to process their refund or that they are entitled to £3000.00 compensation. These representations are made without any substance whatsoever. It is in fact a criminal offence for companies to make such calls and anyone receiving such a call should immediately hang up. Simon continued; “If anyone is unsure whether they had PPI or have not yet reclaimed it is imperative to get professional face to face advice.”

Capital Financial Management operate on a no win no fee basis and do not ask their PPI clients to pay anything up front. As one happy client stated; “I am delighted. 70% of £16,000 was much better than 100% of nothing!” another said “CFM reduced all of my loan and credit card payments by 80% three years ago. This saved me over

£650.00 a month. To now get a lump sum of £4800.00 is fantastic.”

Capital Financial Management make no secret of the fact that it is possible for consumers to reclaim themselves. However, as the company point out, in addition to reclaiming the PPI premiums it is important to ask for compound interest and statutory simple interest. Some consumers will simply not have the time or inclination to deal with this and those that do will often give up when the banks final response is ‘No’. CFM will rigorously pursue the matter with the Financial Ombudsman Service and on occasions have been able to substantially increase the



amount which otherwise may have been accepted.

It is important to note that there are deadlines and those who think they may have a claim should act now. “It is incorrect to say that consumers have only 6 years to claim. We have many clients who have claimed for loans sold in the 1990’s. However now that the issue is within the public knowledge time limits will apply”.

If you, a friend or colleague have not yet claimed for the refund to which you are entitled or you are experiencing debt problems, you are urged to contact Simon and the team on 0121 585 5810.



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£2.6m work on town's park is now under way

WORK is under way on a long-awaited £2.6 million revamp of Dudley's historic Priory Park. Under the plans, the existing pavilion will be extended to provide a modern visitor centre offering educational and community facilities.

It will include the provision of public toilets and act as a base for a park ranger. The work, which includes new lighting for the old Priory ruins, is expected to be completed by the summer. Extra trees are being planted, footpaths repaired and new signs installed.

There will also be resurfacing of the football pitch and bowling green. The Friends of the Priory Park and Green and Dudley Council applied for just under £1.8m of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund

for the project. Councillor Tracy Wood said: "I'm delighted work is getting under way at Priory Park, it will enable us to preserve and restore this beautiful green space."

"We would like to thank everyone for their patience while we undertake this important work."

New artwork for the park, including medieval-style floor tiles, sculptural entrances and a 6ft statue of tennis hero Dorothy Round, has been designed by pupils from Castle High School, Priory Primary and Dudley College.

Miss Round was born in 1908 and attended Dudley Girls' High School. She won Wimbledon in 1934 and 1937. She died in 1982.

Toy shop latest 'victim'

A TOY shop has become the latest business in Stourbridge to close - with bosses blaming disruption caused by a multi-million pound town centre redevelopment for hitting trade.

Dudley Council says disturbance caused in a £50 million redevelopment of the Crown Centre, which will create a new Tesco employing up to 320 people, will be worth it in the end and has appealed for people to be patient.

But traders say they are being hit by the work, with the three-year-old Rabbit and Rhino store in Market

Street, now shut. The Harvest Moon gift shop, Victoria Passage, and Polka Dot Paradise ladies' clothes shop on the corner of Market Street and High Street blamed redevelopment work for their closure.

Rabbit and Rhino owner Lisa Homer said sales dropped almost 50 per cent due to building work, which started with demolition of Bell Street car park in April.

She said loss of parking, a dirty shopping environment due to building work, increasing charity and bargain shops along with disappearing independents and big retail names led to rapidly decreasing footfall. "I didn't feel I could survive

another year waiting for the town to flourish."

"I am sure the Tesco development will bring shoppers to Stourbridge but how many businesses can survive nearly two years of disruption?"

Councillor Shaikat Ali, said they tried to keep disruption to a minimum and asked people to bear with them because end results would be hugely beneficial.

Tesco spokesman Jonathan Simpson said: "Once the Tesco development is open in September or October this year the town will have more additional visitors because of the footfall of the store."

Row over pub screen

A HAGLEY sports bar's outdoor large TV screen has been put up without planning permission - and parish councillors now want the volume turned down.

One neighbour has complained about noise from spectators watching sporting events at West One in Worcester Road.

The owners have now applied for retrospective planning permission. Councillor Jim Austin said: "I've been and watched it. It wasn't too bad." Parish council planning spokesman Peter King said: "We could ask that use of the TV is limited to 10.30pm."

New chief taking over at Beacon



Incoming chief executive Arwyn Jones, with outgoing chief Ian Ferguson, at Beacon Centre for the Blind

WHEN Ian Ferguson was appointed chief executive of Sedgley's Beacon Centre for the Blind in June 2003, the charity was struggling to stay afloat having made a loss of £650,000 during the previous year.

But just a few months into his new job, former retail buyer Mr Ferguson had already got plans in place to transform the Wolverhampton Road East site's dilapidated buildings. It took five years to raise the money needed for the £14million centre which opened in a blaze of glory and brought the charity into the 21st century.

Mr Ferguson, who lives with his wife Maureen in Much Wenlock, Shropshire, has now stepped down from running the charity. He said the completion of the multi-million pound project had been one of the highlights of his time there.

"I've done a lot in the nine-and-a-half years I've been at Beacon Centre and rebuilding the centre has probably been the biggest achievement. It's been great to see the charity really move forward in that time and hopefully I am leaving it in a strong position for my successor."

The 61-year-old will be replaced by Arwyn Jones, previously commercial director of Keep Britain Tidy.

Reserve walk hoping to pull in new visitors

WREN'S Nest Nature Reserve, Dudley is hoping to attract first time visitors by organising a walk later this month.

The walk is part of Dudley Museum and Art Gallery's 100th anniversary of its public display of geology. During the year of geology each month will have a different geological theme and events at the museum and the nature reserve will run throughout the year. On January 27 a two-hour guided walk aimed at those who have never visited the site before will introduce them to what makes the Wren's Nest so special. It will also include a fossil hunt on the reserve, which is world-famous for the trilobite fossil known as the Dudley Bug.

People should meet on the car park on the Mons Hill College site, Wren's Hill Road, Dudley at 10am. To book ring 01384 812785.

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The next morning a visit is made to one of the most picturesque and atmospheric quarters of Paris, Montmartre, home of the artists and street entertainers, with of course the whole area dominated by the white domed basilica of the Sacre-Coeur.

There will also be free time in the city. Perhaps take a trip up the Eiffel Tower, a cruise on the River Seine, a browse amongst the antique shops, a wander around the picturesque gardens or take your time to visit Paris' incredible range of attractions.

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departing April 19, July 12 and 19



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Two days selected weekend departure dates



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Pompeii, Capri and the Bay of Naples

Eight days various departure dates



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- Certain entrance fees payable locally

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

The John Smith's Grand National

Two days departing April 6



PRICE FROM £125

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- Entrance to the Steeplechase enclosure (upgrade to Tattersalls enclosure offered)
- Visit to Chester
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Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

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Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

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Organised by Newmarket Holidays (ABTA V7812, ATOL 2325)

Easter break Walking on the Gower & Pembrokeshire Coast

Four days departing March 29



PRICE FROM £255

- Return coach travel
- Three nights half-board accommodation
- Two guided walks
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NEWS

Parking on street will stay despite safety fears

ON-STREET parking will remain along a busy route into Stourbridge town centre despite concerns over traffic congestion. Double yellow lines were painted in Birmingham Street two years ago.

They were removed when temporary bus stops were introduced during the redevelopment of Stourbridge Bus Station. Birmingham Street leads drivers to the town's ring road. Concerns were raised by residents that workers clogged the bustling dual carriageway by parking up for free each day.

The original double yellow lines were introduced in a scheme which banned parking on 68 roads around the town centre.

They were introduced to combat issues such as congested roads and workers parking near residents' homes all day. Passengers queued up at around six stops along the high street as services moved out of the station during the works.

The £7million project was completed last April. It had been expected double yellow lines would return once the temporary bus stops and shelters were removed.

Margaret Scott, chairman of watchdog group Stourbridge Township Council said: "This parking can make the roads quite narrow but we shall just have to see if they come back."

But ward councillor Pete Lowe said it was unlikely the parking bans would return.

Cost-cutting idea to create single library service shelved

COST-cutting proposals to create a single Black Countrywide library service have been shelved by council bosses. Talks on a possible merger had been taking place between Dudley, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Sandwell councils in a bid to save more than £1 million a year.

Shop scheme will be boost

A MULTI-MILLION project to build a supermarket will complement other regeneration projects in Dudley, the developers have promised.

Cavendish House, a former Inland Revenue office block, has been branded an eyesore among calls for it to be pulled down. The offices overlook homes in the Kates Hill area of the town alongside Dudley Southern Bypass.

Now plans have been passed to tear down the building to make way for a supermarket bringing 300 jobs and an estimated £44 million turnover.

Developer Cavendish Quarter Properties is behind the scheme.

Director Christopher Mc-Pherson said: "The granting of consent is a major step towards removing an eyesore at this prominent approach into the town centre and we can now move forward with more certainty in bringing this excellent opportunity closer to realisation."

"The project will have significant regeneration benefits for the town and will complement the council's other town centre initiatives currently in the pipeline."

Rival schemes including the Porters Field development on the same site are also in the pipeline.

They have now decided not to press ahead with the plans to share back office functions for a combined service as each council had different priorities.

A single management structure would have been in place across the area under the plans. Dudley Council still needs to find savings of £347,000 in 2013/14, which could lead to redundancies. Dudley Council is now looking at reducing staffing levels in the libraries, archives and adult learning department to find £75,000 of the shortfall, says a report by adult services director Andrea Pope-Smith. Further proposals to find the remaining savings are being drawn up. The report said: "To meet the identified savings there will be a requirement to reduce staffing level."

"However, it is not possible to state at this stage exactly how that will be achieved as we are currently in the process of consulting with employees over a number of options."

Stocks

Although plans for a single service have been dropped for now, councils said they would all continue to work together in some areas to help reduce costs.

Wolverhampton City Council has already overhauled its service as part of proposals to save £1m. In Walsall, cost-cutting measures have been put in place as part of plans to save £140,000 in the next three years.

Sandwell councillor Linda Horton said: "It was decided by the councils to move away from a single Black Country library service as each have their own priorities. Instead, it was decided to work on co-operative arrangements, like book purchasing contract arrangements, that will ultimately help to reduce costs."

Bands help college to evolve



Audio Disease, from Dudley, perform at the rock event at the new Evolve building

A MUSIC extravaganza was staged to show off state-of-the-art facilities at Dudley College's new Evolve centre.

The live stage event, which coincided with the college's open day, saw local bands performing at the new training centre in Tower Street.

There was also a demo clinic for potential young bands to get expert advice and opinions from Kerrang DJ Alex Baker.

The showcase, hosted by Matt Stocks from Kerrang, attracted hundreds of people.

"It's been absolutely brilliant," said Jane Williams, the college's



The audience enjoys one of the bands at the rock event

strategic marketing manager. Groups in the line-up included Caught, The Mighty Young, Audio Disease and DRAG.

The new Evolve Centre,

which opened last September, is the new home for the college's developing music, travel and tourism, public services, sport and performing arts departments.

Group given voucher joy

A PLAYGROUP from Brierley Hill has managed to collect thousands of vouchers to fund the purchase of equipment at schools and groups across the borough.

Withymoor Playgroup, in Gayfield Avenue, collected more than 14480 Active Kids vouchers in 2012 making it the biggest fundraiser for Sainsbury's Amblecote and Merry Hill voucher campaign.

Since the Active Projects began in 2005 the stores have managed to raise £764,415 which has gone towards sports equipment for schools in the region.

Schools cash in with the Co-op

FOUR Kingswinford primary schools have received donations from a supermarket chain after shoppers cast their vote.

Shoppers at the Midcounties Co-operative, Kingswinford High Street, voted in the Community Choices.

They were able to suggest worthy recipients of a £3,000 charity pot. Glynne was awarded £1,200, the highest share. St Mary's CofE, Dawley Brook and Blanford Mere received £900, £600 and £300 respectively.

Taxi nominations

DUDLEY Council has launched the annual Taxi Base of the Year award to celebrate the level of service provided by taxi companies. To nominate firms visit www.dudley.gov.uk/business to nominate, or download a form and send it to 5 Ednam Road, Dudley, DY1 1HL, before February 19.



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family days out, comedy shows, festivals and much more**expressandstar.com/entertainment****NEWS**

Chapel plan funding is closer thanks to grant

A £1.15MILLION project to restore a Grade II listed building housing two chapels has moved a step closer after lottery bosses awarded funding for detailed designs to be drawn up.

The plans to open the Lye and Wollscote Cemetery Chapels, which have not been used since 1993, have been backed by the Heritage Lottery Fund which means the group behind the plans can make an application for more funding.

West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust which is working to refurbish the site has been given £42,300 to work on a full grant application of just under £850,000 at a later date.

The project aims to repair the redundant building in Cemetery Road, Lye which houses identical Anglican and Non-conformist chapels – and bring it back into sustainable community and commercial use.

History experts say it's a rare surviving example of two chapels within a single building.

The site which is owned by Dudley Council was severely at risk due to lack of use when volunteers at the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust stepped in to save the building.

Now members are working towards taking full ownership of the building under an arrangement called asset transfer, supported by the council.

Tea dances held at centre

A COMMUNITY centre in Brierley Hill has started running weekly tea dances.

People can enjoy an afternoon of waltz, quickstep, cha cha and rumba.

The sessions will run from 2pm until 4pm every Monday at Nine Locks Community Centre in Hill Street. They cost £2 and Refreshments will be available in the interval.

Banding together for cash



Black Country Gaz, front, and band members get ready for the gig at JB's

A LIVE music night is being held tomorrow as part of a campaign to save Dudley Hippodrome.

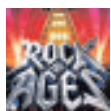
Featuring performances from six local bands, the event is due to take place at JB's nightclub on January 25.

Money raised will go towards the campaign to save the derelict theatre, which could be demolished

to make way for a temporary car park. Campaigners have been fighting the proposals for the past year and want the building reopened.

Friends group spokesman Geoff Fitzpatrick said: "Money raised from the fundraiser will go towards supporting our campaign." Dudley Council is pursuing an application to demolish the building.

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*The "from" price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure for details.
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The new main menu offers a variety of new dishes from which you may struggle to

decide which sumptuous dish to choose. The tempting offer which runs Sunday - Thursday means your main dishes are half price. Therefore you can select from the Seafood, Classics, Chef Recommendations along with a Healthy Options for those who are looking to watch their post Christmas food intake.

With a combination of freshly prepared side dishes the restaurant is able to accommodate a choice for all diners even those who have special dietary needs. With a host of chefs available to ensure each dish is cooked fresh to order and to your own tastes, all may be accompanied by a choice from the sundries menu.

Appetisers can be ordered from the sharing platter section

of the menu or traditional individual starters to suit your preference. Simply select your preference and nibble whilst you chat awaiting the main event. Extra time is taken to prepare each dish fresh from order allowing you time to enjoy the flavours our appetisers offer.

The Main event can be selected from a variety of styled dishes including the Chef's Recommendations, Tandoori specials, Biryani selection, and traditional balti dishes along with Seafood & Signature dishes. We are able to offer something for every taste.

The dessert menu offers both hot and cold options which you can select from the individual menu allowing you to choose some traditional Indian sweets or light options to finish off your meal. Coffee and Tea is served and along with a liquor of your choice if you should so wish.

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What's On! Halesowen

Farm Boy play at arts centre

NETHERTON Arts Centre is hosting a production of the follow-up to the hugely successful War Horse next month. Farm Boy is written by former Children's Laureate Michael Morpurgo.

It is described as a moving account of the changing face of the English countryside and a reminder that stories reach out across generations.

A general public performance will take place on February 26 at Netherton Arts Centre, Northfield Road at 4.30pm and a school-group-only session at 1.30pm. The show is performed by The New Perspectives Theatre Company in a co-production with Scamp Theatre.

Singing workshop invitation goes out

A SINGING workshop will take place at a Stourbridge church. The choir at St Thomas's, Market Street will be running the class on February 2.

It will take place in the church hall from 10am until 3.30pm and will be led by director of music Jon Payne. No previous experience is necessary. To book a place, call Mollie Berry on 01384 373111 or Jo Bond on 01384 376143.

Artists on show

BRIERLEY Hill Society of Artists has opened an exhibition at Wordsley's Red House Glass Cone. It runs until April 7 and features watercolours, oils, pastels and acrylics. The attraction is open Monday to Sunday from 10am to 4pm.

Rhydian on the Rocky road back for 40th anniversary

THE REGION'S theatres are back with a bang after panto season thanks to an acclaimed new version of a vintage Ealing comedy, the return of a raunchy rock musical favourite and a classic bodice-ripper.

Wolverhampton Grand stages The Ladykillers, a stage version of the 1950s British black comedy about an old lady pitted against a criminal gang, which has been revamped by Father Ted co-writer Graham Linehan.

It's on at the Lichfield Street theatre from Monday to Saturday and has a top-notch cast, including Michelle Dotrice (who was Betty in TV's Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em), Clive Mantle and Cliff Parisi.

Bronte

Fresh from playing the lead role in Jesus Christ Superstar, Ben Forster becomes Brad opposite Emmerdale's Roxanne Pallett as Janet, being seduced by Oliver Thornton's Frank 'n' Furter in the naughty Rocky Horror Show.

It's at Birmingham New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to Saturday.

They are likely to be upstaged by The X Factor's Welsh singing sensation



Michelle Dotrice as Mrs Wilberforce in black comedy The Ladykillers

Rhydian, who Time Warps back to the city where he was a student, wearing not much more than a posing pouch as Rocky in this 40th anniversary tour.

Hull Truck stage a version of Charlotte Bronte's gothic romance Jane Eyre at the Arena Theatre in Wolverhampton for three performances during Tuesday and Wednesday.



Everything is hunky dory for Rhydian, returning to Birmingham to camp it up in the Rocky Horror Show



Damn it, Janet - Ben Forster as Brad and Roxanne Pallett as Janet, held prisoner by singing alien sex addicts

Nice to see the Strictly dancers

Strictly Come Dancing, NIA, Birmingham

NICE to see them - and it certainly was. As the sixth Strictly Come Dancing tour opened to a packed Birmingham NIA, the atmosphere was electric.

Those famous Bruce words echoed around the packed arena and although he wasn't there in person, his voice could be heard booming out from the two large screens by the stage.

The thousands who made the precarious journey through wintry conditions to see the show were richly rewarded.

Opening to the sounds of Gold from the Strictly singers - that's what the show was. Hosted again by bubbly Kate Thornton the tour boasted everything, stunning costumes, outspoken judges and dazzling dance routines.

The Magnificent Seven, as head judge Len Goodman referred to them, included reigning champion Louis Smith, Denise Van Outen, Phil Tufnell, Dani Harmer, Fern Britton, Lisa Riley, and Michael Vaughan.

Joining Len on the judging panel was the formidable Craig Revel Horwood and the excitable Bruno Tonioli but the final vote was down to the audience.

Louis picked up another win despite Denise scoring a perfect 60 from the judges. At the bottom were Tufnell and Vaughan.

A mixed line-up of talent but a terrific show. Bruce would have been proud.

Sue Attwater

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What's On!

SATURDAY'S TV 26.01.13

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CHOICE



David James Elliott

Impact
Channel 5, 6.20pm
If you like movies such as Independence Day, Armageddon and Deep Impact, then this offering made for a fraction of their budgets, should also appeal. The partial threat is a rogue asteroid hidden in a meteor shower which hits the moon. Before you can say: "It's the end of the world as we know it!", the satellite is on a collision course with billions of screaming folks. David James Elliott, Natasha Henstridge, Benjamin Sadler and James Cromwell play the protagonists trying to find a way to survive before Earth is turned into rubble.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.30 The Good Cook. (R) 12.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather. 12.15 Football Focus. 1.00 Rugby: Wales Grand Slam 2012. 1.30 Live Athletics: UK International Match. 4.30 Final Score. 5.15 BBC News; Regional News; Weather. 5.30 Animal Antics.
6.00 Richard Hammond's Secret Service. A woman's home is ruined by graffiti.
6.45 Britain's Brightest. Clare Balding hosts the game show in which six contestants aim to prove they have the brain power to claim the ultimate prize of £50,000.
8.00 The National Lottery: In It to Win It. Dale Winton presents the quiz in which five contestants pit their wits to scoop a big cash prize. Includes the National Lottery draws with OJ Borg.
8.50 Casualty. It is the day of Yvonne's funeral and Jordan is shocked to receive a message asking him to visit the teenager accused of her attack, while her real assailant ends up in the ED.
9.40 Mrs Brown's Boys. Agnes resorts to the internet to find a date for Valentine's Day. (R)
10.10 BBC News: Weather.
10.30 Film: Meet the Parents. (2000) A male nurse makes a disastrous bid to impress his girlfriend's father - a former CIA agent who does not suffer fools gladly. Comedy, starring Robert De Niro and Ben Stiller; National Lottery Update.
12.15 Film: Buster. (1988) 1.45 Weatherview. 1.50 BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Film: The Black Rider. (1954)
7.05 Film: The Mouse That Roared. (1959) **8.25 Live Tennis: Australian Open. 11.30 Map Man. (R) 12.00 Indian Food Made Easy. (R) 12.30 EastEnders. (R) 2.25 Live Bowls. 4.30 Jaguars Born Free: Natural World Special. (R) 5.30 Flog It! (R)**
6.00 The Great Comic Relief Bake Off. Famous faces enter the Great British Bake Off tent. (R)
7.00 The Great Comic Relief Bake Off. Famous faces enter the Great British Bake Off tent. (R)
8.00 Dad's Army. The platoon takes an efficiency test in a bid to prove its worth, but mistakenly attacks a tea lady with onions from Jones's van. Classic comedy, guest starring Fulton Mackay. (R)
8.30 Natural World: Kangaroo Dundee. Part one of two. Documentary about a man living in the Outback who shares his one-room tin shack with baby kangaroos he has nursed back to health.
9.30 Howard Goodall's Story of Music. New series. The composer examines the history and development of music, beginning by looking back at the first faltering steps humanity took toward creating it.
10.30 QI XL. With Sarah Millican, Jimmy Carr and Johnny Vegas. (R)
11.15 Film: Hard Rain. (1998) Action adventure, starring Christian Slater.
12.45 Bowls. 1.45 Close.

ITV

**6.00 CITV: Handy Manny. 6.10 Handy Manny. 6.25 The Hive. (R) 6.35 The Hive. (R) 6.40 Dino Dan. (R) 6.55 Dino Dan. (R) 7.05 Almost Naked Animals. (R) 7.15 Almost Naked Animals. (R) 7.30 Almost Naked Animals. (R) 7.40 Matt Hatter Chronicles. (R) 8.05 Ultimate Spider-Man. 8.30 Victorious. (R) 9.00 Jessie. 9.25 ITV News. 9.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. 10.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. 11.20 ITV News; Weather. 11.25 All Star Family Fortunes. (R) 12.10 Live FA Cup Football. 3.00 Dinner Date. (R) 4.00 The Nation's Favourite Abba Song. (R) 5.30 Regional Programme; Weather. 5.45 ITV News; Weather.
6.00 New You've Been Framed! Top 100 Holidays. Comedian Harry Hill narrates a countdown of 100 vacation-themed camcorder calamities and viewer-submitted mobile-phone clips.
7.00 Splash! Omid Djalili, Jake Canuso, Eddie "the Eagle" Edwards, Charlotte Jackson and the two celebrities who progressed from heat three battle it out in the semi-final of the diving contest.
8.30 Take Me Out. A basketball player, a gym owner, a music journalist and a product designer enter the love lift in the hope of impressing 30 single women. Paddy McGuinness presents the dating show.
9.45 The Jonathan Ross Show. With Jools Holland, Alicia Keys, Adam Hills and Rose Byrne.
10.45 ITV News: Weather.
11.00 FA Cup Football Highlights. 12.30 The Store. 2.30 In Plain Sight. (R) 3.15 ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

**6.10 The Hoobs. (R) 6.35 The Hoobs. (R) 7.00 Beach Volleyball. 8.00 The Morning Line. 9.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 9.30 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 10.00 Frasier. (R) 10.30 Frasier. (R) 11.00 Undercover Boss Australia. (R) 12.00 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.30 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 12.55 The Simpsons. (R) 1.30 Channel 4 Racing. 4.00 Come Dine with Me. (R) 4.30 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.05 Come Dine with Me. (R) 5.40 Come Dine with Me. (R)
6.05 Channel 4 News.
6.35 4thought.tv. With some people believing the role of the godparent has been devalued in modern Britain, a member of the public talks about its relevance in an increasingly secular society.
6.40 Film: Mrs Doubtfire. (1993) A divorced actor disguises himself as an ageing female Scottish housekeeper to get a job looking after his own children. Comedy, with Robin Williams, Sally Field and Pierce Brosnan.
9.00 World Without End. Godwyn is outraged when Mother Cecilia rejects his plans to build a palace on the convent estate and issues an edict giving the Priory control over all town land.
10.00 Film: The Hurt Locker. (2008) An American bomb disposal team in Iraq is assigned a new leader whose reckless attitude puts all their lives at risk. Kathryn Bigelow's drama, with Jeremy Renner and Anthony Mackie.
12.40 Film: Cyrus. (2010) 2.15 Hollyoaks. 4.20 Smallville. (R) 5.00 Countdown. (R) 5.45 Baking Mad with Eric Lanlard. (R)**

CHANNEL 5

**6.00 Milkshake! 10.00 Power Rangers Samurai. (R) 10.35 Batman: The Brave and the Bold. 11.10 Celebrity Big Brother: Final. (R) 1.10 Film: Patricia Gifford's At Risk. (2010) Mystery, starring Andie MacDowell. 2.55 Everything She Ever Wanted.
6.15 5 News Weekend.
6.20 Impact. An asteroid strikes the moon, knocking its orbit out of kilter and setting it on a collision course with Earth. Disaster drama, starring David James Elliott. (R)
9.45 Film: The Matrix. (1999) A computer hacker joins rebel fighters to free the human race from a virtual-reality fantasy created by machines. Sci-fi action thriller, with Keanu Reeves and Laurence Fishburne.
12.30 SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. 4.00 Michael's Wild Challenge. Michaela Strachan meets deadly lionfish, Ellie Harrison attends a dinner party in the desert, complete with chameleon guests, and Jamie Crawford joins a pod of dolphins. (R) 4.25 Great Artists. Tim Marlow examines the work of Dutch artist Jan Vermeer, who was renowned for his depictions of simple domestic life during the 17th century. (R) 4.50 County Secrets. Historical spotlight on scenic counties in the UK, focusing on hidden curiosities and little-known facts about each location. (R) 5.05 Hana's Helpline. Hana offers advice to Ernie. (R) 5.15 The Milkshake! Show. A curious parcel arrives at the house. (R) 5.35 Thomas & Friends. Thomas takes holiday-makers on a trip. (R) 5.50 Roary the Racing Car. (R)**

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Merlin 7.45 Doctor Who 8.35 Film: Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl (2003) 10.45 Family Guy 11.30 American Dad!
BBC Four
7.00 Lost Land of the Volcano 8.00 The Treasures of Ancient Rome 9.00 Borgen 11.00 The Old Grey Whistle Time: 70s Gold
ITV2
5.40 Film: Robots (2005) 7.25 Film: Back to the Future (1985) 9.45 Take Me Out - The Gossip 10.30 Fake Reaction 11.15 Film: The Fugitive (1993)
ITV3
4.55 Agatha Christie's Marple 7.00 Doc Martin 9.00 Midsomer Murders 11.00 Film: In the Name of the Father (1993)
ITV4
2.25 Film: All Quiet on the Western Front (1979) 5.30 Live Africa Cup of Nations. Algeria v Ivory Coast (Kick-off 6.00pm) 8.30 Mourinho 9.30 Film: Escape from New York (1981) 11.35 Film: American History X (1998)
F5
3.35 Rules of Engagement 6.00 The Big Bang Theory 7.00 Happy Endings 8.00 How I Met Your Mother 8.30 2 Broke Girls 9.00 Film: Drillbit Taylor (2008) 11.05 The Big Bang Theory
Film4
3.20 Arthur's Hallowed Ground (1986) Comedy drama, starring Jimmy Jewel. 4.50 Journey to the Center of the Earth (2008) Fantasy adventure, starring Brendan Fraser. 6.40 The Land Girls (1997) Wartime drama, starring Anna Friel. 8.50 Green Zone Interview Special 9.00 Green Zone (2010) Paul Greengrass' thriller, starring Matt Damon. 11.10 White Noise (2004)

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What's On!

SUNDAY'S TV 27.01.13

CHOICE



Mark Jenkins

The Hotel Channel 4, 8pm
Admittedly, it can't be easy running a hotel; having the ability to keep everybody happy all the time and doing it through those stubbornly gritted teeth with a pseudo-friendly grin plastered across your face. But if Basil Fawley can do it, Mark Jenkins is going to make damn sure he can. But he wants to go over and above running a hotel with a so-so reputation that simply ticks over – he wants to broaden The Grosvenor's horizons and attract new guests. Mark ventures into new territory as he plans an Indian night – complete with singing, dancing and lavish feast.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Sunday Politics: Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.25** Countryfile. (R) **1.25** Call the Midwife. (R) **2.25** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.25** Chatsworth. (R) **4.25** Songs of Praise. **5.00** Africa. (R)
6.00 BBC News: Regional News; Weather.
6.30 Blandings. Clarence needs someone to keep his niece Gertrude company, while Freddie has married a Portuguese girl – now all he has to do is conceal the fact from Connie.
7.00 Countryfile. A visit to south Wales, finding out what is being done to rejuvenate the sand dunes on the coast and hearing about a mass German escape from a Bridgend prisoner-of-war camp in 1944. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.
8.00 Call the Midwife. The unexplained death of a newborn baby delivered by Cynthia puts the midwife under intense scrutiny, a chance encounter returns Jimmy to Jenny's life and Chummy pursues a dream.
9.00 Ripper Street. Reid and his team investigate a string of well-executed robberies, bringing Drake into conflict with his former army colonel.
10.00 BBC News: Regional News; Weather.
10.25 Prisoner Number A26188: Henia Bryer. A Jewish woman who survived four Nazi concentration camps.
11.05 Room 101 – Extra Storage.
11.45 The Celebrity Apprentice USA.
1.10 Weatherview. 1.15 BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Close. 7.00 Life in a Cottage Garden with Carol Klein. (R) **7.30** A to Z of TV Gardening. **8.15** Live Tennis: Australian Open. **12.00** Coast. (R) **1.00** Film: Cowboy. (1958) **2.30** Live Bowls. **5.15** Ski Sunday.
6.00 Flog It! Paul Martin is joined by Charlie Ross and Mark Stacey to value items in Monmouth, south-east Wales, including a selection of Babar books and a pocket globe. (R)
6.30 Orbit: Earth's Extraordinary Journey. Kate Humble and Dr Helen Czerski follow the Earth's trip around the sun from January to the March equinox. (R)
7.30 Open All Hours. Pilot episode of Roy Clarke's comedy about miserly shopkeeper Arkwright and his put-upon nephew Granville. Starring Ronnie Barker and David Jason. (R)
8.00 Top Gear. New series. The motoring magazine returns. Jeremy Clarkson builds a small car and pitches the concept in the Dragons' Den and Damian Lewis is the Star in a Reasonably Priced Car.
9.00 Wonders of Life. New series. Professor Brian Cox travels around the world to investigate whether the emergence of life was an inevitable consequence of the physical laws that govern the universe.
10.00 Racing Legends: Colin McRae.
11.00 Fleetwood Mac – Don't Stop. A profile of the rock band. (R)
12.00 Film: Intermission. (2003)
1.40 Sign Zone: Holby City. (R)
2.40 Close.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Handy Manny. **6.10** Handy Manny. **6.25** The Hive. (R) **6.35** The Hive. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Dino Dan. (R) **7.05** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.15** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.30** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.40** Matt Hatter Chronicles. (R) **8.05** Rated A for Awesome. **8.15** Rated A for Awesome. **8.30** Big Time Rush. **9.00** The Aquabats Super Show. **9.25** House Guest in the Sun. (R) **10.20** 60 Minute Makeover. (R) **11.20** May the Best House Win Vive la France. (R) **12.20** ITV News; Weather. **12.30** Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **1.30** Rosemary & Thyme. (R) **2.30** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **3.25** Regional Programme; Weather. **3.30** Live FA Cup Football.
6.05 ITV News: Weather.
6.15 Dancing on Ice. The nine remaining stars compete in a school disco-themed show.
7.45 All Star Family Fortunes. Actress Sheree Murphy and Towie star James Argent take part.
8.30 Dancing on Ice: The Skate Off. The contestants who landed in the bottom two earlier tonight perform new routines as they battle for a place in next week's show. Phillip Schofield and Christine Bleakley present.
9.00 Mr Selfridge. Prima ballerina Anna Pavlova agrees to visit Selfridges, but Agnes's job looks to be under threat when a violent Reg reaches breaking point and gateratches the event.
10.00 ITV News at Ten: Weather.
10.20 FA Cup Football Highlights.
11.20 Anglo-Welsh Cup Rugby Union.
12.15 Crimethinkers. (R) **12.40** The Store. **2.40** Monk. (R) **3.30** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Hoobs. (R) **7.05** Will & Grace. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** Film: Annie. (1982) **4.25** Time Team. **5.30** Deal or No Deal.
6.25 Channel 4 News.
6.55 **4thought.tv.** Members of the public talk about the role of godparents.
7.00 Come Dine with Me. A week of dinner parties in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, featuring an American-themed evening, a Wild West-style bash and unusual delicacies including ostrich egg and pig's ears.
8.00 The Hotel. The Grosvenor hosts an Indian-themed night, featuring dancing, singing and a lavish feast – which falls well below the expectations of one millionaire guest.
9.00 Film: The Fighter. (2010) Premiere. Fact-based drama following boxer Micky Ward's rise to a world championship bout, with the aid of his drug-addicted brother. Starring Mark Wahlberg and Christian Bale.
11.20 Film: The Firm. (1993) The murder of one of his colleagues, a law graduate discovers the company that has head-hunted him is controlled by the Mafia. Thriller, starring Tom Cruise and Gene Hackman.
2.05 Honeymoon. (R) **2.40** St Elsewhere. (R) **3.25** Smallville. (R) **4.05** Deal or No Deal. (R) **5.00** Countdown. (R) **5.45** Baking Mad with Eric Lanlard. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowertots. (R) **6.25** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **6.30** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.45** Olive the Ostrich. (R) **6.50** Abby's Flying Fairy School. (R) **7.00** Rookbarb and Custard Too. **7.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.20** Animal Antics. (R) **7.25** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.40** City of Friends. (R) **7.50** Mio Mao. (R) **8.00** Little Princess. (R) **8.10** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.25** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **8.45** Rupert Bear. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.25** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **9.40** Jelly Jam. **10.00** Power Rangers Samurai. (R) **10.35** Batman: The Brave and the Bold. **11.10** Monkey Life. (R) **11.40** Once Upon a Time. (R) **12.40** Film: The Wolf. (1985) **2.30** Film: See Spot Run. (2001) **4.20** Film: The Princess Bride. (1987)
5.00 **5 News Weekend.**
6.15 **Film: Spider-Man 3.** (2007) Superhero sequel, with Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst and James Franco.
9.00 **Person of Interest.** Reese recovers from being shot.
10.00 **Film: My Best Friend's Girl.** (2008) Premiere. Romantic comedy, starring Dane Cook, Jason Biggs, Katie Hudson and Alec Baldwin.
11.55 **Botched Up Bodies.** Part two of two. A woman left with 10lb of excess skin after losing 15st. (R)
12.55 **SuperCasino.** **4.00** Michaela's Wild Challenge. (R) **4.25** Great Artists. (R) **4.50** County Secrets. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.15** The Milkshake! Show. (R) **5.40** Thomas & Friends. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Don't Tell the Bride – Best Ever
8.00 Film: Cool Runnings (1993)
9.30 World's Craziest Foods **10.00** Crazy for Party Drugs **11.00** Family Guy **11.45** American Dad!
BBC Four
7.00 Timeshift: Of Ice and Men **8.00** Holocaust: A Music Memorial Film from Auschwitz **9.30** Mark Knopfler: A Life in Songs **10.30** Film: Love Like Poison (2010) **11.50** Arena: Dave Brubeck: In His Own Sweet Way
ITV2
4.00 Film: Toy Story (1995) **5.50** Film: Back to the Future Part II (1989) **8.00** The Best of You've Been Framed! **9.00** The Magaluf Weekend **10.00** Film: Wanted (2008)
ITV3
3.40 Lewis **5.40** Murder, She Wrote **6.40** Agatha Christie's Poirot **9.00** The Best of the Royal Variety **10.00** Film: The Graduate (1967)
ITV4
1.55 Film: Captain Newman MD (1964) **4.30** Live Africa Cup of Nations. Morocco v South Africa or Cape Verde v Angola (Kick-off 5.00pm). **7.30** Police, Camera, Action! **8.00** Anglo-Welsh Cup Rugby Union **9.00** Film: Apocalypse Now (1979)
E4
4.30 Revenge **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** New Girl **7.00** How I Met Your Mother **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: Fame (2009) **10.05** The New Normal **10.30** 2 Broke Girls **11.00** My Mad Fat Diary **Film4**
3.05 The Iron Giant (1999) **4.45** Rebound (2005) **6.30** Marley and Me (2008) **8.50** Django Unchained Interview Special **9.00** Aliens (1986) Sci-fi thriller sequel, with Sigourney Weaver.

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Film Choices

MONDAY

Assassins, Channel 5, 10pm

Hitman Robert Rath is planning to quit his lethal profession, especially when he is stalked by a ruthless younger assassin who has no qualms about killing innocent bystanders. But as Rath takes on his last assignment, he decides to protect his intended target after his rival comes gunning for her. Thriller, starring Sylvester Stallone and Antonio Banderas. (1995)

TUESDAY

Fifty Dead Men Walking, BBC1, 11.55pm

Fact-based thriller telling the story of Martin McGartland, who was recruited as a police informant in 1980s Belfast and sent on a mission to infiltrate the IRA. He rose swiftly through the ranks, providing vital information to the British authorities. Once he was exposed, he was tortured and forced to go into hiding. Starring Jim Sturgess and Ben Kingsley. (2006)

Paper Moon, Channel 4, 2.55am

A Depression-era conman meets a canny nine-year-old orphan, whom he realises could be his daughter, and agrees to take her to her aunt. Along the way, he realises the little girl is just as cunning as he is, and they form a successful criminal partnership. Drama, starring Ryan O'Neal alongside real-life daughter Tatum. With Madeline Kahn and Randy Quaid. (1973)



The Ring 2, Wednesday, BBC1, 12.05am

WEDNESDAY

The Ring 2, BBC1, 12.05am

Journalist Rachel Keller and her son try to rebuild their shattered lives, moving from Seattle to Oregon and starting afresh. However, the vengeful spirit of Samara follows, and this time she is determined to destroy them. Sequel to the horror remake, starring Naomi Watts, Simon Baker and David Dorfman. (2005)

THURSDAY

Navy Seals, Channel 5, 10pm

The US Navy's elite commando force embarks on a dangerous covert mission to rescue hostages from an Arab terrorist in Beirut. However, the assignment proves far more serious than expected when they realise their enemies have acquired powerful stolen missiles. Action adventure, starring Charlie Sheen. (1990)

FRIDAY

The Last Samurai, Channel 5, 9pm

The emperor of Japan recruits an American Civil War veteran to train his troops in a bid to wipe out a rebel faction of samurai warriors. The soldier is taken captive when the imperial army is defeated, and comes to respect his enemies' traditions and code of honour. Historical adventure, starring Tom Cruise. (2003)

Pick of the Week

There's no cheesy role for returning Martine

Well, we've witnessed some extraordinary demises in *Midsomer Murders*, but here's one that really takes the biscuit – death by cheese.

Yes, you really did read that correctly. And what's more, the character involved is played by former soap princess Martine McCutcheon. TV really can be a bizarre concoction at times...

McCutcheon is actually rather good as Debbie Moffett, who is crushed to death by a giant round of cheese at the award-winning dairy where she worked, just hours after an argument at a parents' council meeting at Midsomer Pastures Prep School.

It's been a while since we saw McCutcheon acting, and it seems she enjoyed being back on the box.

"I'm a troublemaker in the episode which is set around a posh prep school. My character is well-to-do and feisty, she's not Tiffany from Albert Square. It's great to do something I wouldn't normally do, as she's not a nice piece of work."

Certainly after Debbie's body is discovered, her colleagues seem

more concerned about the state of the cheese than the woman herself – which probably tells you everything you need to know about her standing in the community.

Barnaby and Jones are also suspicious about the fact that nobody had a bad word to say about her – surely somebody somewhere must have had a crossed word with her at some point.

Eventually, the truth comes out. Debbie's daughter was about to be expelled from school; she was there on a scholarship which comes with strict rules not only for the pupil, but their parents too – and Debbie had broken one by having an affair with her boss, ex-rugby international Gregory Brannner.

Later, another body is found, this time with its mouth full of maggots. What can this mean?

Barnaby believes the answer lies in the dairy – every scrap of evidence the police finds seemed to be linked to it. But piecing it all together is where the hard work really starts...

McCutcheon has been performing professionally since the age of 12

when she landed a role in an advert. Modelling assignments, bit parts in TV series and appearances in music videos followed. She then had a stint in girl band Milan before *EastEnders*' bosses came calling.

She spent four years in Albert Square as Tiffany, with her final episode gaining 22 million viewers.

Since then, her career has been hit-and-miss, with a stint as a pop star and successful roles on stage in *My Fair Lady* and on the big screen in *Love Actually* proving to be the highlights.

But maybe happiness in McCutcheon's private life is about to signal a return to stardom – she recently tied the knot with singer-songwriter Jack McManus.

She says: "We are best friends as well as lovers and totally supportive of one another. We feel that we can conquer anything the world throws at us as long as we have each other, and that's a rare thing."

Perhaps this could be her perfect moment at last.



Martine McCutcheon stars in *Midsomer Murders*, Wednesday, ITV, 8pm

Best of the Rest

MONDAY

Lewis

ITV, 9pm

In this concluding episode of a two-part story, Lewis realises that palbearer Liam Jay was beaten up and left for dead because he knows something about Whitby's death. The killer then turns their attention to Liam's girlfriend, and only some quick-thinking by the veteran detective saves her from death when the narrowboat on which she lives is set alight. Hathaway's jaunt to Kosovo soon comes in handy too – Lewis finds out that the Faulkners have a farmhouse in Croatia that may hold vital clues, so he sends his pal to take a look around.

Rory and Will – Champions of the World

Channel 5, 9pm

Rory McGrath and Will Mellor – an odd couple you may think, but they actually work well here. The duo's remit is to become the best in the world at a selection of bizarre events. They begin by journeying to King's Lynn, home of Alan Cooper, the supreme Reliant Robin racer. The famed three-wheelers are driven to near destruction in each race, as Will soon finds out; Rory, meanwhile, adopts some cunning tactics that might just ensure an unlikely win. After that, they try some more sedate pastimes, including coin-tossing, thumb-wrestling and pea-shooting.

TUESDAY

Emmerdale

ITV, 7pm

As a one-time teen mum, Debbie should know the signs that a young girl is about to get out of her

depth. So, when she spots 14-year-old Belle putting make-up on at the bus stop, and then heading back to the empty Dingle homebased arm-in-arm with Luke, she decides to tell Lisa what's going on. The concerned mother rushes home to find the teens canoodling on the sofa and forcibly separates them before warning Luke never to come back.

Dallas

Channel 5, 9pm

Like one of Ewing Oil's lucrative drilling sites, there's a rich seam of nostalgia to be gleaned from this slick revamp, but the loss of Larry Hagman last year was bound to leave fans moist of eye during his final performances. (Fans may note that a full episode later in the season will be devoted to JR's death). This week, Christopher attempts to gain the upper hand in his divorce from Rebecca Sutter (Julie Gonzalo). However, a bombshell soon scuppers his plans, so most of the family puts their differences aside and joins forces. Elsewhere, Ann (Brenda Strong) and Bobby face an alarming secret from her past when Harris Ryland (Mitch Pileggi) blackmails her.

WEDNESDAY

Derek

Channel 4, 10pm

Last April, Ricky Gervais played Derek Noakes, a seemingly autistic 49-year-old care worker who worked at

Broadhill retirement home. It was one of the most touching, original comedy dramas of 2012, and now he's back directing, producing and starring in the first of a six-part series inspired by that pilot. Broadhill faces closure following a visit from the council, but the home's manager, Hannah (Kerry Godliman) is determined they stay open and rallies Derek, Dougie (Karl Pilkington) and Kev (David Earl) to raise money for the home.

THURSDAY

The Secret Life of Dogs

ITV, 9pm

Millions of people in Britain share their homes with a dog but how much do we really know about our four-legged friends? Don't worry, this documentary, narrated by Martin Clunes, isn't a shocking exposé

about the dark side of canines, but it will give us a new insight into their behaviour, and their incredible hearing and sense of smell. We also get to find out how dogs are putting these 'super powers' to work as we hear from the people who owe their lives to a mutt, including Maureen Burns, who believes her collie cross Max detected her breast cancer before the doctors did.



Rory and Will – Champions of the World, Monday, Channel 5, 9pm

Charlie Brooker's Weekly Wipe

BBC2, 10pm

When it comes to weekly TV review shows, BBC Two has the genre sewn up with *The Culture Show* and highbrow *The Review Show* covering similar territory. Thankfully Charlie Brooker has never been a member of the stinky chin brigade, and is more likely to ridicule those who are as here he takes a satirical look back at the events of the past seven days, whether it's news, telly, video games or anything else that winds him up. 'Weekly Wipe will be a sort of *Omniwipe*, encompassing *Newsnight*, *Screenwipe*, *Gameswipe* and *Stuffwipe*, for want of a better phrase,' he Tweeted recently. Some may dislike Brooker's tone, but in a world of slick presenters who look great but say little worth hearing, he's always a breath of fresh air.

FRIDAY

Coronation Street

ITV, 7.30pm

So what if he's charming, well-spoken, and his idea of romance doesn't involve sharing a pack of pork scratchings in the *Rovers Return*? Lewis is still a wrong 'un. Not content with planning to break Gail's heart and empty her bank balance, the conman is also blackmailing Kylie. He informs the horrified barmaid that he won't tell the rest of Weatherfield know that she could be carrying Nick's baby on the condition that she gets him the passport to her mother-in-law's bank account. Meanwhile, Gail is getting ready to tell her family that she's moving to Italy using the £40,000 she's borrowed against the house, but her lover is nowhere to be seen – has he already done a runner with her cash?

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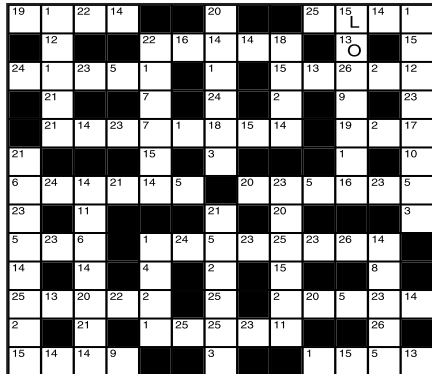
What's On!

Brain Gym

No.205

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
V H A X S T P B E Y G J R
L M N D F U Z K Q O I W C

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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Sounds like a narrow channel without curves (8)
5. A spot for a vertical descent (4)
9. Not bound to be without charge (4)
10. Replacement footballer to command group (8)
11. I'd come back with transport for this piece of furniture (5)
12. Remove what was once a religious article (7)
13. They have a stirring influence beneath the surface (13)
18. How large towns are populated? Hardly! (8)
19. A good deal of money on the carpet (4)
20. A place from which to direct what precis writers do (7)
21. Clean up the lottery (5)
22. Book coming my way? (4)
23. Star skater is out of place here (8)

Down

2. Twist - or it's no change (7)
3. To declare how old a person is - that's mean (7)
4. Those who are busy doing homework (5-8)
6. A second draft is made when the warden returns north (7)
7. The sea-trip could be ruined by them (7)
8. Kind of board for securing bricks (6)
13. In a high position to begin with, he's only just made good (7)
14. Drawing a grid differently before morning (7)
15. Go back to do some more sewing, we hear (6)
16. Authorise me to return to governing office (7)
17. They prepare the ground for producing steering devices (7)

Quick Clues:

Across

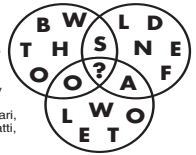
1. Immaculate (8)
5. Disable (4)
9. Performs (4)
10. Artist's paint boards (8)
11. Droll (5)
12. Protection (7)
13. Make-shift (5,3,5)
18. Correct answer (8)
19. Defeat (4)
20. Exhausted (7)
21. Truck (5)
22. Resound (4)
23. Correctly (8)

Down

2. Small flute (7)
3. Trying (7)
4. Permanent rule (8,5)
6. Feeler (7)
7. Dominance (7)
13. Remainder (7)
14. Let loose (7)
15. Detesting (6)
16. Clasp (7)
17. Plunder (7)

Circlegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
The letter represented by the question mark is I. Ferrari, Maserati, Bugatti, all sports car manufacturers.

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Detached bungalow with large gardens



French doors open from the dining room onto the rear garden

The rear garden has an extensive lawn and a gravelled seating area

DESCRIBED as immaculately presented, this three-bedroom detached bungalow in Walsall Road, West Bromwich, has been reduced by £13,000 for a quick sale, and is now on the market at £230,000.

The accommodation briefly comprises of lounge, fitted kitchen with utility, cloakroom, conservatory, three bedrooms, family bathroom and garage, and also benefits from central

heating, double glazing and front and rear gardens.

On the ground floor the lounge, 17ft 10in by 11ft 2in, has a brick built open fireplace with oak beam and French doors to the conservatory which is 13ft 2in by 9ft 8in.

The kitchen, 10ft 10in by 8ft, has a range of wall and base units, work surfaces, sink drainer, electric oven and hob with grill and cooker hood over, integrated dishwasher and fridge freezer and door to utility room measuring 7ft 7in by 7ft 1in with cupboards, work surfaces and plumbing

for washing machine. There is also a cloakroom with WC.

There are three bedrooms and a bathroom comprising panel bath with shower over, wash basin and vanity units and WC.

Outside to the front is a lawned area with borders and shrubs and off road parking while the rear garden has a gravelled patio area leading to a decked area, lawn with borders, shrubs and fruit trees.

For more details call estate agent Worton Kelly on 0121 588 5666.

This bungalow on Walsall Road has been reduced by £13,000 to £230,000 for a quick

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MANOR WAY, HALESOWEN



Impressive 4 bed detached home
Breakfast kitchen & 2 x rec rooms
Master bed with ensuite, sep. Bathroom
Landscaped gardens, swimming pool
Overlooking open countryside
Integral garage, EPC rating E
£429,950 Ref: D816

DEVON ROAD, BEARWOOD



3 bed home with driveway to front
Gardens to rear of property
26ft lounge diner and 15ft fitted kitchen
UPVC DG & gas central heating
No upward chain
Gardens to rear, EPC rating: D
£169,950 Ref: D1260

KINITHS WAY, HALESOWEN



Extended 3 bed semi-detached home
Cul-de-sac position with private rear aspect
Extended & refitted 14ft kitchen
17ft lounge & separate dining room
Refitted bathroom & 3 bedrooms
Blockpaved driveway & garage
EPC rating D
£139,950 Ref: D1256

CHATSWORTH ROAD, HALESOWEN



3 double bedrooms & 2 bathrooms
Dining room, 17ft lounge & 11ft kitchen
Driveway for several vehicles & garage
Lawn garden with elevated aspect
UPVC double glazing & gas central heating
EPC rating D
£134,950 Ref: D1268

HILLSIDE CLOSE, BARTLEY GREEN



Extended home in cul-de-sac
16ft lounge leading to 13ft dining area
Refitted 11ft kitchen
3 good sized bedrooms & refitted bathroom
Rear garden with private aspect
UPVC DG & GCH, EPC rating: C
£129,950 Ref: D1265

PARKES STREET, SMETHWICK



Well presented 3 bed terraced home
UPVC double glazing & gas central heating
Lounge & open plan kitchen/dining room
Downstairs bathroom with white suite
2 double & one single bedroom on first floor
EPC rating: D
£97,500 Ref: D1262

ABBEY CRESCENT, OLDBURY



Much improved 3 bed semi with parking
Entrance hall & WC - spacious lounge
Refitted breakfast kitchen with appliances
Two double and one single bedroom
Refitted bathroom with shower - white suite
GCH & UPVC DG, EPC rating: D
£148,000 Ref: D1147

PERRY HILL ROAD, OLDBURY



Extended & immaculate 3 bed home
2 receptions, breakfast kitchen & utility
Conservatory & refitted d/s shower room
Refitted u/s bathroom with roll top bath
Private garden with westerly aspect
Driveway & garage, EPC rating: E
£195,000 Ref: D1243

APSLEY ROAD, OLDBURY



Extended 4 bed semi
Large Kitchen with dining room off
Lounge & separate sitting room
4 beds, shower room & 2nd WC
Parking to front & enclosed rear garden
UPVC DG, GCH & alarm, EPC rating: D
£179,950 Ref: D1230

CHESTNUT ROAD, OLDBURY



3 bedroom detached family home
No upward chain
26ft lounge diner & kitchen
Garage & driveway
Extensive lawned rear garden
GCH & DG fitted, EPC rating: E
£164,950 Ref: D1236

ROMSLEY ROAD, OLDBURY



Superb 3 bedroom semi-detached home
Refitted 16ft dining kitchen & 13ft lounge
Refitted bathroom with white suite
Driveway to front & workshop to rear
UPVC DG & gas central heating
EPC rating: D
£129,950 Ref: D1253

FERNDALE ROAD, OLDBURY



Spacious 3 bed home
Lounge & kitchen diner
Large Store ripe for conversion
3 bedrooms & bathroom
Block paved driveway for two cars
EPC rating: D
£109,950 Ref: D1227

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HALESOWEN, NEWTON COURT

A Recently Converted Three Bedroom Penthouse Apartment Finished To An Extremely High Standard Centrally Located With Commuter Links To Halesowen And Birmingham. Featuring Two Double Bedrooms, Bath With Fitted Wardrobes, With Two Bathrooms, One Single Bedroom, Secondary Glazing Throughout, Allocated Parking, Viewings Recommended. EPC rating = C

£750 PCM



HALESOWEN, TANHOUSE LANE

Ideally located for Colley Lane Primary School, local shops in Colley Gate, bus routes to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Merry Hill, is this lovely semi-detached home, featuring 3 good size bedrooms with 2 having fitted wardrobes, modern fitted kitchen, 3 good size lounges, well worth a viewing. EPC rating = C

£600 PCM



MERRY HILL, MADISON AVENUE

A Lovely And Spacious Unfurnished Modern Townhouse, Within Yards Of Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Comprising Of: Gas Central Heating, Fitted Kitchen, Downstairs WC, Dining Room/Study, Lounge, House Bathroom, Three Bedrooms, Master Bedroom With En-Suite Shower Room, Allocated Parking Space. Available Immediately. EPC rating = C

£595 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, BARRS ROAD

An End Terrace Unfurnished Property, Recently Part Refurbished To A High Standard And Situated In A Popular Residential Area, Comprising Of: Three Bedrooms, Fitted Kitchen, Two Reception Rooms, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Off Road Parking With Rear Garden. With The Advantage Of The Water Rates Pre Paid Until March 2013! EPC rating = D

£595 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, VALLEY ROAD

A very nice and welcoming home, this 3 bed house features a spacious lounge with separate dining room, modern kitchen with a freezer, downstairs wc, house bathroom and shower, driveway and well kept gardens to front and rear. EPC rating = D

£595 PCM



HALESOWEN, HAGLEY STREET

A fully refurbished modern duplex apartment above an electrical shop in the very centre of Halesowen. Briefly comprising of: Large Open Plan Living Area with Modern Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Rental Includes £40 Electricity. EPC rating = C

£590 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, HALESOWEN ROAD

Located on this popular road, with easy access to Halesowen, Cradley Heath and local train station, this lovely semi detached house which features 2 double bedrooms and a single bedroom, spacious lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, front and rear gardens, parking to the rear and on road. Well worth a viewing. EPC rating = B

£575 PCM



HALESOWEN, BLOOMFIELD STREET NORTH

An extremely well presented end terrace which has had a full re-decoration and new carpets, is this two bedroom semi detached home, within walking distance to Halesowen, local bus routes and shops, comprising of: two bedrooms, nice lounge, attractive fitted kitchen with white goods but no washing machine, utility room, central, house bathroom with shower, a glorious courtyard garden. EPC Rating = C

£550 PCM



HALESOWEN, PEACHLEY CLOSE

Undergone a complete refurbishment with a brand new kitchen, brand new bathroom, new decoration, is this detached bungalow which is centrally located to Halesowen and within walking distance to shops and bus routes to Stourbridge and Birmingham, featuring 2 bedrooms, spacious lounge, driveway parking. A rare opportunity to see a bungalow which is not to be missed. EPC rating = D

£550 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, PRINCE STREET

Currently undergoing a re-decoration, is this semi detached house briefly comprising four bedrooms (two double, two single), spacious lounge, in progress of having a new kitchen, downstairs w.c., bathroom with double shower cubicle. Benefits include: gas central heating, double glazing, driveway parking, low maintenance rear garden. EPC Rating = B

£545 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, LUANNE CLOSE

Situated in this popular residential area, is this top floor apartment, which overlooks the canal and has its own balcony, comprising of: two bedrooms, spacious lounge, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, access to balcony from the master bedroom, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking. Well worth an inspection. EPC rating = B

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, PRINCESS CRESCENT

Situated in a highly sought after location, and an opportunity not to be missed, is this stunning first floor apartment featuring a light and spacious lounge, beautifully fitted kitchen, 2 large bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking. Available immediately. EPC Rating = C

£525 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, PROSPECT GARDENS

Located Close To Stourbridge Town Centre And Stourbridge Junction Train Centre, is This Unfurnished Newly Decorated Mid Terrace House, Comprising Of: Two Bedrooms, Fitted Kitchen With Dining Area, Cosy Lounge, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Bathroom with Shower, Small Rear Garden, Parking Space To Front. EPC rating = D

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, FAIRMILE ROAD

Situated in popular residential area of Halesowen, with easy access to buses to the town, is this modern furnished first floor apartment, comprising of: two bedrooms, lounge, and fitted kitchen, bathroom with a shower, gas central heating, double glazing, garage parking, and communal gardens. EPC rating = E

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, HARDEN COURT

Situated In Popular Residential Area Of Halesowen, With Easy Access To Buses To The Town, is This Part Furnished First Floor Apartment Comprising Of: Two Bedrooms, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom With A Shower, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Garage Parking, Communal Gardens. EPC rating = C

£495 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, DELINGPOLE WALK

An unfurnished mid mews house, in a well sought after location, briefly comprising of: gas central heating, living room, fitted kitchen, downstairs wc, two bedrooms, bathroom with shower, rear garden, two allocated parking spaces. EPC Rating = B

£475 PCM



BRIERLEY HILL, FOXDALE DRIVE

Been Freshly Redecorated And Within A 5 Minutes Drive Of Brierley Hill Town Centre And Few Minutes More From Merry Hill Shopping Centre, is This Unfurnished End Terrace House, Comprising Of: Two Bedrooms, 1 With Fitted Wardrobes, House Bathroom With Shower, Nice Sized Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, On Road Parking, No Garden. EPC rating = C

£475 PCM



HALESOWEN, APPERLEY WAY

A spacious Part Furnished first floor apartment on the ever popular Homer Hill estate, briefly comprising of: One Double Bedroom, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower, Unfurnished. Available Immediately. Highly Recommended. EPC rating = F

£400 PCM



OLDURBY, CAUSEWAY GREEN ROAD

This large, split level flat above shops, within walking distance to bus links and close to J2 of the M5, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Spacious Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Parking to Rear, Unfurnished. EPC rating = D

£400 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, WINCHESTER CLOSE

A very well presented, unfurnished first floor apartment, close to the M5 J2, briefly comprising of: Two Bedrooms, Fitted Kitchen, Lounge, Double Glazing, Bathroom with Shower, Parking Space and Parking Area for Visitors, Communal gardens. EPC rating = D

£395 PCM



NETHERTON, ST GEORGES ROAD

This lovely unfurnished first floor flat, situated in a quiet area, comprises of: Electric Storage Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Double Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Rear Garden, Parking space. EPC Rating = D

£375 PCM



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Stone-front cottage in a village location



This newly-built stone fronted cottage in Bridgnorth in on the market with All Morris for £250,000

A RECENTLY-BUILT individual stone-fronted cottage in a village outside Bridgnorth is for sale priced at £250,000.

The accommodation at Apple Tree Cottage, Chorley, briefly comprises of three bedrooms, family bathroom, 20ft through lounge, kitchen with range of integral appliances, hall and guest cloakroom and side garage – and with south-facing gardens.

The property was built around 2006 for the current owner and is fitted out to an exacting standard, set back

behind a gated gravel driveway and stone wall and with a neat front garden.

Inside a reception hall has a central feature staircase and landing, and there is a guest cloakroom with white suite including vanity unit.

Larger

The lounge/dining room has a log effect gas fire with double doors to the garden patio and also to the fitted kitchen with a range of cabinets and integrated appliances including electric double oven, ceramic hob, canopy

hood, fridge freezer and dishwasher.

On the first floor are three bedrooms, the bigger two with built-in wardrobe/closet space, while the bathroom has a white suite of shower, wash hand basin, panelled bath and WC.

The side garage is of larger than average size with plumbing for automatic washing machine, while to the rear is a paved patio terrace and two steps up to a lawn garden with countryside views.

Call Allan Morris on 01562 519079 for further information.

Great ideas come from outside the storage box

It's not too late to make a New Year's resolution to tackle the clutter in your home. Gabrielle Fagan comes up with some smart and good-looking storage solutions

STYLISH storage has suddenly been transformed into a stunning addition for any home. Our desire for streamlined, contemporary interiors means we're demanding attractive and imaginative ways of dealing with today's ultimate interiors sin - clutter. Designers are responding by creating solutions which store possessions efficiently - and make a style statement at the same time.

"Many of us have to live in homes much smaller than we might desire," says interior designer Joanna Wood (www.joannawood.co.uk). Generally, we also underestimate the number of possessions we have by about a third, which can lead to a storage conundrum. But that doesn't mean you have to abandon your design ideals.

"With thought and careful planning you can make the most of every inch of space using beautiful solutions combining function and good looks."

A calm atmosphere is essential in living areas. Open shelves and cupboard storage can allow treasured and decorative items to star while everything else is concealed but to hand.

"In contemporary interiors there's no room for jarring clutter," says Wood.

"Storage has become an art form which enhances rooms and is at the top of the list when designing an interior. Sleek doors which open at a touch are popular, while others have handles that are a feature in themselves and made in materials such as leather, mother-of-pearl or crystal.

Lists

"The key to success is to recognise no space is too small to store something. Every corner, recess or landing can be utilised to provide a home for belongings. Even stair treads can be transformed into drawers."

Imagine you're a visitor to your home and look at your possessions objectively. Make lists of items you could discard, current storage that needs de-cluttering and an area which could be used for new storage. Avoid fitting hand-height flat surfaces as it's all too easy to fill them with objects that never get moved.

A bespoke system which caters for every storage need is hard to beat. A contemporary Cream Lounge system



Organised, but at a price! For the ultimate in home storage solutions have a look at this cream lounge library, from £3,000 by Neville Johnson

starts from around £3,000, Neville Johnson.

It's vital that a home office feels organised and conducive to work in. This room will often be multi-purpose and used by different members of the family as a den or homework area as well as an office, and ideally each person will need their own allocated storage," says Wood.

"Nowadays, these are planned down to the last inch in the same way as fitted kitchens. Enclosing everything within fitted cupboard doors reduces distractions and makes the whole area feel organised."

If a whole room's not available, she advises making the most of an awkwardly shaped area, such as a loft or under the stairs, with built-in storage for an office. Use wasted space behind a door or on the wall over a desk by hanging organisers with pockets.

A wall-hung board like Vitra Utensilo White, from £173.40, Heal's, with its integral solid pockets, is ideal for clutter which would normally litter a desktop.

Having problems sleeping in a bedroom that's bulging at the seams with clothes? Both are sure signs that your storage is inadequate.

"This is a room where you want a tranquil, calm atmosphere and as little clutter as possible," says Emma Sims-Hilditch, partner at furniture company

Neptune. Try to have in it only the things you need, rather than allowing it to become a part-time ironing room or office. The investment of commissioning built-in bedroom furniture is worthwhile if you plan to stay in your home for the foreseeable future."

Calculate your storage requirements (how many metres of hanging and folded storage you need, and don't forget space for shoes), before visiting a bedroom furniture specialist.

"A divan bed with fitted drawers or under-bed storage boxes can provide valuable extra storage."

Consider raising the height of your wardrobe rail so you can fit storage boxes or a shoe rack beneath hanging clothes.

Learn

Children's rooms seem to shrink as the inhabitants grow and gather their multitude of toys and possessions. "Children have more need for storage than anyone else. But whatever solution you choose it should be easy for them to use so they can learn as early as possible to do their own tidying," says Wood.

Modular storage systems, which can be added to as the child and its possessions grow, are a good solution.

Position drawers close to the floor so children can reach them. Also look for soft close actions on drawers and storage boxes.

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Offers Over £140,000

Detached three bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, extended kitchen, conservatory and a integral garage. Dudley

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The SsangYong Rodius with 2.0-litre 153bhp diesel unit offers impressive flexibility

Budget people carrier gets new diesel engine

SSANGYONG has fitted the Rodius with a new diesel engine for 2013, making the budget seven-seat people carrier better value than ever.

The 2.0-litre, 153bhp unit offers a claimed 266lb/ft of torque from just 1,500rpm, maintaining that peak until 2,800rpm and giving impressive flexibility particularly for towing. Its fuel

economy is 38.7mpg combined.

With all seven seats installed, the Rodius has 875 litres of luggage space floor to ceiling. It increases to 2,271 litres with the rear three seats removed.

The entry-level £15,995 S model has a Kenwood audio system, climate control, full electric windows and Bluetooth connectivity as standard, along with ESP stability control, ABS with electronic brake-force distribution (EBD) and Isofix child seat mounts.

Mid-range ES spec adds heated leather front seats, alloy wheels and rear privacy glass, while also opening up the option of a tried-and-tested Mercedes-sourced five-speed automatic gearbox. It costs £17,995 for the manual and £19,495 for the auto.

The flagship model is the EX, which benefits from a switchable four-wheel drive system to aid with towing in difficult conditions.

Capable of towing up to 2,000kg, the automatic-only EX costs £21,995.

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Official Government Environment Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Chevrolet Spark Range: Urban 42.8 (6.6), Extra Urban 67.3 (4.2), Combined 55.4 (5.1) CO₂ emissions 119g/km. Chevrolet Aveo Range: Urban 34.0 (8.3) - 67.2 (4.2), Extra Urban 55.3 (5.1) - 85.6 (3.3), Combined 44.8 (6.3) - 78.4 (3.6), CO₂ emissions 147 - 95g/km.

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New Volvo S40 unleashed to take on the opposition

George's top tips to bring out the new driver in you

VOLVO has filled a significant gap in its model range with the all-new V40 five door hatchback, says Brindley Volvo Sales Manager Andy Alburt.

He said the V40, which had replaced the S40 saloon and V50 estate models, had now given Volvo a direct rival to its major competitors – something it had needed for a long time.

Andy, who has spent the last two and a half years as sales manager of Codsall-based Brindley Volvo, said the V40's styling had elements of the S60, V60 and XC60 with a hint of C30 at the rear.

Dramatic

"The V40's exterior is designed to look dramatic without being overly aggressive," said Andy. "The front of the car is particularly low with an air intake at the bottom of the front bumper that emphasises its width."

"The sides of the car narrow towards the roof and the V40 has the most steeply raked windscreen of any Volvo yet."

The V40 sits on a modified version of the platform used for the C30, S40 and V50. The wheelbase is 1cm longer while the body is 14cm longer and 3cm lower.

He said the cabin had a very similar look to the S60 and used much of the same switchgear. "It is equally classy and the quality of materials and finish is very impressive."

"There's a range of finishes available for the dashboard and door trims and a choice of new cloth and leather upholstery options. One of the surprise features is the illuminated gear knob which uses LEDs under a plastic cover to show which gear you're in. It's part of an affordable option for both manual and auto versions."

Andy, who heads a sales team of five at Brindley Volvo, said he was



Andy Alburt with the all-new V40 at Brindley Volvo at Codsall

impressed with the range of hi-tech safety features including an upgrade of Volvo's City Safety system that works up to 31mph.

He commented on the world-first pedestrian airbag. If sensors detected a pedestrian collision, pyrotechnic devices would push the bonnet hinges up and an airbag would pop out from

beneath to cover the windscreen and front pillars.

He added that all the engines on the launch units were turbocharged and familiar from the present model range. The V40 would have the new range of four cylinder diesel engines.

The V40 starts from £19,995 on the road.

GEORGE Partou, marketing manager for Vision Vauxhall, in Stafford, shares his thoughts on new year's resolutions behind the wheel.

His top tip for the new year is – banish bad driving and brush-up on motoring etiquette

New year is the time for resolutions and turning over a new leaf. So, before you fall off the bandwagon completely, turn your thoughts to your performance behind the wheel, where, admittedly, we could all do with some improvements.

At some point or another, we've all been guilty of undertaking or perhaps a little road rage.

So now is the perfect time to address your in-car etiquette and make a fresh start for a smooth ride in 2013.

So whether it's cooling off in a tail-back or treating your car to some TLC, read on for new year's resolutions to kick start the all-new driver in you.

1. A poll conducted by the AA found that 70 per cent of participants' new year's resolutions were to avoid getting parking tickets.

So, if you find yourself regularly pleading with the parking attendant to stop writing that ticket out, make 2013 the year you plan your parking ahead.

2. As 99 per cent of road accidents in Britain are caused by human error, it's no surprise that being a safer driver is one of the most popular goals to have, and this includes avoiding creeping over the speed limit.

But, with many insurance companies now offering money back in return for careful driving, not only will you see a direct benefit in your pocket, it will also make you a more mindful driver, overall.

3. Road rage was a common guilty trait, with 58 per cent of those polled aiming to drive less aggressively. So, next time you feel the rage boiling inside you, take a deep breath to avoid



George Partou – ideas for a smoother drive in the new year

taking it out on your car or other road users.

4. For the calmer drivers out there, driving more economically is often a priority. Try and stay in a high gear to burn less fuel, turn off your engine when you are stationary for longer than a couple of minutes, or invest in a car which has a low fuel consumption.

5. A common annoyance for drivers

is the risk of breaking down, but this can be easily avoided. Remember to get your oil levels and tyre pressures regularly checked.

As with every new year it's now time to take stock, so make this new year's resolution one to remember in the motoring stakes.

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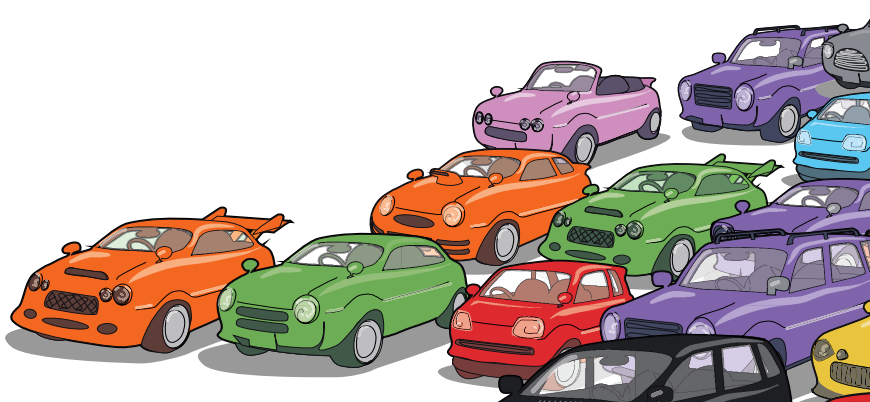
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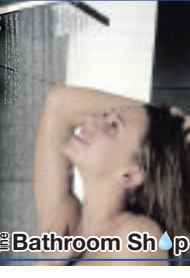
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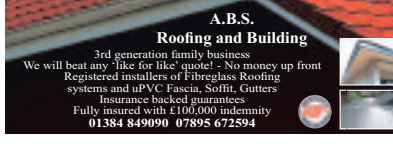
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 3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
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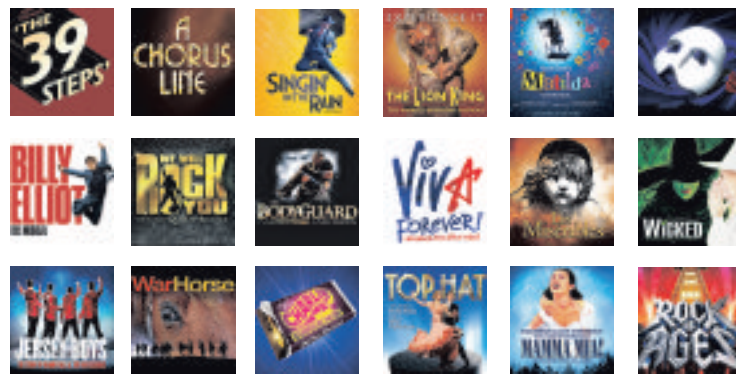
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LIZ 42, black, divorced, seeking male, 44-54 for kind, sincere, honest, open relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400949**

KATHY 38yrs, knows what she wants out of life, wltm similar genuine male to wine/dine enjoy travel, share ambitions and hopefully fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400793**

CHANTELLE 40yr old slim sensual confident female who loves to party, seeking older male for fun dates without complications. Any age/race. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400465**

JACKIE lonely discreet 30's female with many interests, WLTm kind professional male to share nice times with. Status/age/looking unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400451**

GRACE Jones lookalike, black lady, 53, 5ft 11ins, OHAC, WLTm male, 45-65, 6ft plus for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397681**

CAROL 37 attractive slim blonde, curves in all the right places, nice personality, good company, looking for caring fun man for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400263**

CLARE 37 attractive slim with long dark hair and big brown eyes, WLTm genuine male who is honest, sincere and won't waste my time or break my heart. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400199**

TRACY 26, pretty petite brunette, possibly looking for LTR but definitely looking for fun times with outgoing guy. Any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397027**

CLARE 38, single mum, curvy hour glass, loves to be tactile, OHAC, WLTm caring male for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399047**

PAULA 37, WLTm male companion for meals out, social drinking, weekends away, hopefully leading to a meaningful friendship with benefits! Any age. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398503**

MICHELLE 39yr old nurse, slim, petite, blonde, blue eyes, looking to enjoy life with similar romantic, caring guy. Single dad welcome. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398349**

MARIA French female looking for mutually convenient companionship, very friendly, very discreet and very interested in meeting with you! **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397451**

NATASHA single professional 39yr old brunette looking for fun and friendship with genuine guy, 30-50yrs. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395719**

CAROLINE attractive, kind, caring, 43, seeking kind, caring male for LTR, 45-50. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396837**

TRISH tall slim young/good looking GSOH, professional, solvent, OHAC, affectionate and loves life, WLTm male who also likes to be in a loving relationship, 39-50yrs. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397579**

CARING lady, 52, brown hair/eyes, seeks male, 30-60 for socialising, meals out, cinema, music, sports and having a laugh. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 392883**

LOVING caring young 68yr old female, 5ft 2ins, slim-medium build, size 12, smoker, seeks slim, well dressed guy with GSOH for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399923**

ANGELA green eyed dark haired feminine lady who enjoys walking and keeping fit, seeking lonely kind gentleman for good times and more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399633**

LISA attractive blue eyed brunette, sporty, well maintained 25yr old uni student looking for older male for discreet dates. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399619**

DEBS lonely 40's female with no ties, GSOH, N/S, loves the simple things in life looking for similar soul mate to be happy together with. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399523**

HI I'm Sharon an outgoing single mum looking to find love so thought I would give this a go, please don't make me regret it, someone call me pls. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399197**

CARLA 41, brown hair/eyes, 5ft 2ins, loving, seeking male who likes walks, cinema and romantic meals. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396127**

SHARON slim blonde blue eyed outgoing 30's female looking for uncomplicated meets and adult companionship, like what you hear? Call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400119**

I'M Heather I love to cook, eat in/out, share a nice flirty glass of large wine or two with good company and am eager to hear from you. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399715**

NICKY lonely 39yr old single mum looking for adult companionship and strictly no strings fun. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399189**

DEBBIE sexy size 14, fun, outgoing, discreet, looking for fun times only with male over 40yrs, call to find out more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398759**

HI I'm Marilyn a blue eyed beauty. Call me if you have a happy outlook and are seeking some fun. Age/looks unimportant. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395665**

SUE confident professional, sporty/active, seeking sensitive interesting guy for intimate evenings in with great food and conversations. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397485**

LUCY beautiful big bottomed black female, very tactile, seeks mature honest white male for loving fun times. Call me. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397389**

KATHERINE 38, attractive, single, very lonely and looking for love, fun and male companionship. Pls get in touch. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397123**

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HI I'm Natalie 24, pretty, friendly, single, seeking energetic man for romantic walks, cosy nights in and fun-loving relationship. Any age/looks/race. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397489**

TINA young attractive 27yr old single female looking for older friendly loving male for adult fun and good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397563**

BEV 30yr old curvy attractive female, likes music, travel, animals, cosy nights in front of a log fire, looking for affectionate male for good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397535**

MICHELLE attractive 30's female, blonde, leggy and very much single, seeking quality company, hopefully more with nice romantic male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395717**

BUBBLY female, 42, young at heart, honest, caring, likes outdoors, cinema, theatre, meals out, seeks likeminded male/soul mate, 40-50. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 357919**

VICKY honest caring female 33yrs, GSOH, loves meals in/out, travel, cinema, WLTm someone to enjoy nice things in life with and romance. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 383911**

DENISE tall leggy good looking single mum, easygoing, enjoys nights in/out, animals, WLTm tall male for fun times possibly more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 391873**

JENNY blonde eyed cuddly independent female, loves countryside, animals, cooking, WLTm older male to spoil and look after. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 378481**

MAUREEN seeks male 32-45 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 323543**

FUN loving lady, outgoing, honest, caring, likes socialising, seeks older male, 50-70. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 383325**

SHAPELY attractive, light skinned black female, 39, seeks attractive, fit, male, 30's, builder type, tanned, rugged for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 231152**

CAROLINE 42yrs, slim attractive blonde. Varied interests and solvent. WLTm honest male of any age. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395675**

LOUISE 43, 5ft 5ins, medium build, GSOH, kind, caring, honest, genuine, loving, WLTm male, 43-55 with similar qualities for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 376165**

SARAH 23, attractive, brunette, slim, looking for male for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 392979**

KAREN witty female who loves to laugh, WLTm similar male to share interests, romance, cosy nights in and more. Pls call. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393125**

WIDOW 70, genuine, kind, caring, laidback, seeking male for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 387013**

MANDY 36, size 10, looking for relationship with open-minded man. Status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 360317**

ALICIA 19yr old green eyed female, very attractive, slim, long hair, independent, looking for fun with mature male, no time wasters. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 390059**

I'M Julie 36yrs old, attractive, fit, blonde, solvent with OHAC seeking man to spoil and enjoy good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395051**

EASYGOING down to earth female, likes cooking, exploring new things in life, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 386893**

LADY young 60, outgoing, friendly, smart, likes cinema, shopping, meals out, seeks similar female friends for days out and evenings. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 387117**

PAULINE attractive petite nurse, loves evenings in/out, looking for honest male to share loving friendship and good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 379535**

BLONDE attractive educated lady 50, young minded, seeks professional tall male, 45-55 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 391818**

CATHY is a slim attractive lady with an open minded attitude to life, she WLTm a man of any age. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395657**

61YR old lady 5ft 2ins, medium build, long dark hair, smoker, seeks smart gent who wants to get out and about for good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396409**

JANICE 40, 5ft 5ins, medium build, brown eyes, likes music, cooking, cosy nights in/out, seeks similar male for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397407**

BIG bubbly black female, single mum, looking for male for nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 392501**

SUSIE gorgeously feminine and sensual, loves lazy summer days, misses male companionship WLTm someone with sense of adventure and lust for life. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394117**

SINGLE MEN

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TALL mature, solvent male, seeks to wine and dine younger lady. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401241**

YOUNG 70's male, widower, own transport, active in business, likes weekends away, seeks honest, caring female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401203**

IAN tall, medium build, brown hair, blue eyes, caring, genuine, loving, tender, happy go lucky, likes music, theatre, meals out, romantic nights in, seeks similar female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401065**

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TRAVEL buddy/soul mate wanted by tall, professional male with easygoing, down to earth and caring personality.

RICHARD 39, honest, caring, likes cosy nights in/out, seeks lady, 35-40 for good times in and out. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401145**

IAN 6ft, likes meals out, weekends away, seeks female, Midlands. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394134**

DAVE happy go lucky, sociable, seeks attractive young lady, 35-40 to pamper and cook for. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401043**

NEW Year new start. Romantic white male, 47, 5ft 11ins, likes holidays, keep fit, music, cinema, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401013**

KEITH white male, 49, handsome, 6ft 2ins, seeks buxom black female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394094**

MALE 39, 6ft 2ins, honest, loyal, caring nature, seeks similar female with view to permanent, loving relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400703**

FRANK tall, distinguished 68yr old mature, professional gent, sensual, tactile, seeks similar, warm, responsive lady. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400967**

KARL 28, black hair, brown eyes, smart, 5ft 3ins, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400953**

PAUL 52, looking for friendship, possible relationship with someone who can make me happy in 2013. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400849**

MALE 60, 5ft 10ins, loving, caring, seeking genuine female, any age, 40-60 for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400513**

MALE seeking blonde female, 55-60 for discreet adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400435**

COLIN 62, divorced, many interests, GSOH, seeking slim, attractive, 50's female for companionship, maybe LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400389**

MALE 58, good looking, placid, seeks honest, loyal, caring female with view to becoming soul mates. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400313**

STEVE single dad, slim, 45, looking for girl who wants fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400257**

COLIN 62, divorced, many interests, GSOH, seeking slim, attractive, 50's female for companionship, maybe LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400389**

GARY 46, loyal, genuine, GSOH, down to earth, seeking attractive lady for relationship. South Shrops/North Herefordshire. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400237**

STEVE 49, fed up, seeking female for fun and friendship, possible LTR. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393218**

57YR old male, good looking, seeking female for fun times and nights in. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397463**

GARY 39, seeks female, 30-50 for LTR and fun. Single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398747**

FRIENDLY guy 49, tall, fit, GSOH, attractive, seeks lady for discreet fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399091**

GUY early 60's, fit, N/S, OHAC, seeks slim female, 30-60 for fun, adult times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399567**

TAYLOR 50, tall, athletic, GSOH, WLTm female, attractive, curvy for friendship, maybe more, food, communication, evenings out, travel. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399067**

STEVE 54, attractive, seeks older lady, 55-75 for mutual adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399755**

CARL 40, likes DV/DS, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393766**

COVENTRY male, 42, 6ft 1ins, caring, romantic nature, seeks female, single mum welcome, 25-55, any nationality/Foreign for nice times in and out. Genuine replies only. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398671**

BRIAN 60's, intelligent, many interests, loving, affectionate, WLTm West Mids lady for sharing occasional meetings/weekends. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400115**

52YR old single parent, 5ft 11ins, slim, likes most things, walks, nights out, cinema, animals, seeks caring, honest, trustworthy female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400039**

BRIAN 73, fit, N/S, own home, likes walks, cycling, meals out, nights in, holidays, travel, seeks genuine, caring female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399667**

LOOKING for love, Telford male, 46, shaved head, average build, likes walks, meals out, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397941**

DAVID slightly disabled, likes sports, meals out, nights in, seeks female for fun, friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393192**

MALE fun, outgoing, easy-going, seeking female for good times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393346**

55YR old male, likes sports, film, nights in, seeking female, 30-45 for fun times. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398049**

GENO 44, slightly mad but not bad will make you glad you answered this ad. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398231**

STEVEN 49, good looking, likes a laugh, blonde hair, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397985**

GAY SINGLES

IF YOU'RE LOOKING to meet or chat to other men, look no further. **Text: GAY247 to 65125**
www.localgaydate.co.uk

OLDER male, outgoing, sporty, seeking younger man for fun and friendship, slim-medium build, active, hairy. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401225**

CD 70 plus seeking CD 70 plus for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393208**

MALE 34, attractive, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, blond hair, seeks slim male for fun relationship. Any race, can travel. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 311892**

GAY male, 34, slim, toned, seeking older guy for fun, friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395735**

MALE 44, seeking male, 18-23 for fun relationship. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 391626**



Women TEXT FOR FUN!

*see t&c's below. No meetings implied or guaranteed. **Texts cost £1.50 per message** Help Desk: 0844 445 7707

GUYS TEXT FOR FUN. SEND WOL followed by the box number of the person you wish to chat to and send to **66888** (T&C's below)

MATURE lady, experienced in life seeks inexperienced male for informative chats! **Text JPRES 204002 to 66888**

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Aussie is the fifth rider to sign up

BIRMINGHAM Speedway have confirmed Australian Jason Doyle as their fifth rider for 2013.

He will arrive fresh from a successful campaign in his domestic championships, where he finished fifth behind winner Troy Batchelor.

Doyle links up with Chris Harris, Danny King, Josh Auty and Nicolas Covatti in the Brummies' side.

And the 27-year-old is looking for an usual treble – he won the Elite League last year with Swindon and the 2011 crown in the colours of Poole.

Doyle will also double-up, riding for Somerset in the Premier League.

Selco Brummies co-promoter Graham Drury said: "Jason is just the rider we want here and he's a great addition."

"He also loves the Birmingham track and I'm sure we're going to see some big scores from him."

Meanwhile, the tug of war over the services of Ben Barker shows signs of ending.

The Brummies are keen to retain the Cornishman on loan, but parent club Coventry wanted to include him in their 2013 line-up.

However, the Bees have now completed their side by signing Polish rider Grzegorz Zengota which may help clear the way for the Brummies.

Club needs youngsters

WEDNESBURY Cricket Club are looking for the next generation of players.

The club want players in all age groups from seven to 17.

Under-11s – school years four, five and six – train from 6-7pm on Mondays at Wodensborough School, Hydes Road, Wednesbury.

Under-13s – years seven and eight – feature from 6-8pm on alternate Wednesdays starting February 6 at Wood Green School, Wood Green Road, Wednesbury.

Under-15 and under-17 players – years nine, 10, 11, and 12 – are at the same venue on alternate Wednesdays starting January 30 at the same venue.

Each session is taken by ECB qualified coaches. For more details, call Roy Lord on 07738 293817, email r180295@live.co.uk or visit the website www.wednesbury.play-cricket.com

TCR sign Davies for Supercup battle

Motor racing

WEDNESBURY team Total Control Racing have signed a new driver in their bid to retain the Ginetta GT Supercup.

They have snapped up reigning G50 class champion Mark Davies to challenge for the outright title in his first season in the championship's top tier.

Having steered Carl Breeze to an emotional Supercup triumph last year, TCR are determined to remain on top.

The deal with Davies gives the squad one of the quickest drivers in

the series. The 31-year-old is a triple title winner already in Ginetta machinery, having won the Ginetta Challenge in 2009 and 2011 and the G50 crown last season.

Bidding for a fourth Ginetta title, he is expected to be a genuine championship contender this year.

Davies dominated G50 last year with 14 victories from 23 races. He was off the podium only twice all year and had the title sewn up with a race to spare. He then stepped up

to the headline G55 class for the season finale at the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit in Kent where he won two of the three races.

TCR principal Lee Brookes said: "Mark's a fantastic driver to have in the team. He's won the Ginetta Challenge in the G20 car and the G40 car; last year he won in the G50 so we want to try and win the G55 with him."

"He's very quick as he proved at the end of last season with his first outing in a G55. He'll definitely be fighting for the title."

From his early days racing in Stock-Hatch and then the Renault UK Clio Cup, Huddersfield racer Davies has been one of the most competitive drivers in national motor racing and hopes for a fourth Ginetta title in five seasons.

"Ever since back in the days when I raced in Clio's, TCR was always one of the top teams," he said. "It's always been my ambition to drive for them."

The first event of the season is at the Brands Hatch Indy circuit on Easter weekend, March 30-31.



Driver Mark Davies

Olympic cash aid boost for Tividale

TIVIDALE football club will bank £50,000 after being handed a grant from the National Lottery.

The club will invest in an all-weather playing surface after £1.5m was awarded to 29 young groups in the West Midlands.

The Sport England cash is to improve local facilities, create new venues for grassroots sport and allow local clubs to buy the facilities they use.

Midland Alliance side Tividale will build a five-a-side surface for the whole club to use and secretary Leon Murray said it was important to the community.

He said: "Without this money we wouldn't be able to do it. It's not just for the football club, though. We're a thriving club and have a very young social side off it."

"We run an academy on Friday with about 50 to 60 youngsters and at the moment they train on the pitch. We will be able to move the kids onto the new surface."

Cannock rugby club have also been given £50,000 with the fund, part of Sport England's Places People Play Olympic and Paralympic legacy programme.

All improved facilities carry the London 2012 Inspire mark – celebrating the link to the Games.

Sport England's Chair, Richard Lewis, said: "This National Lottery investment is helping us deliver a lasting sporting legacy in the area from last year's successful Olympic and Paralympic Games."

"This is the legacy people want for their local community."

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Kettleby, Telford, Thursday, January 24, 2013.

JASON OUTCLASSED BY CHAMP FRANKIE

ROWLEY REGIS' Jason Welborn was out-classed by a superb performance from British welterweight champion Frankie Gavin as his title dream ended at Walsall Town Hall.

Welborn was stopped on his feet by referee Ian John-Lewis after previously being put down by a right hook to the body, as Gavin gave him short shrift in his first defence.

From the opening bell, Gavin's hands and feet never stopped moving as he gave Welborn the runaround before firing off jabs as he moved in and out of trouble.

Welborn looked flat-footed with tactics successful in Midland title defences against James Flinn and Scott Haywood.

As he got room to use his power Gavin used skill to ensure he didn't go the same way. Welborn landed a right hook to the body in the second but Gavin fired back a right uppercut that dazed his opponent, forcing him to clench as he recovered.

Cornering Gavin, Welborn let his hands go but his opponent used head movement to spot an opening and then jab his way out.

Decider

It was one-way and the decider came in the seventh as a shot dropped Welborn to his knees, although he managed the count.

He hadn't recovered and went into the ropes under more shots and, with Gavin connecting at will despite him covering up, the man in the middle acted swiftly.

Walsall's Martin Gethin took the vacant British lightweight crown at Walsall Town Hall against Hove's Ben Murphy.

Pressure told in the ninth, Gethin made height and range count to pin Murphy back before hooks to the body, referee Marcus McDonnell intervening.

Walsall's Christopher

by Craig Birch

Keane made it a home double, taking the vacant Midlands cruiserweight belt by halting Shane McPhilbin.

McPhilbin, British champ at the turn of last year, took an uppercut to the jaw but answered the count before visiting the canvas again, twice, with body shots. In the third Keane, 2009 ABA super heavyweight champ as an amateur, had the edge.

Two first-round stoppages opened the show before BoxNation cameras went live.

Cannock's 'Handsome' Dave Egan, in with Ricky Stock at welterweight, brought his guard down with hooks on the gloves, before a knockout right.

Birmingham super-middleweight Andrew Robinson put down Leamington Spa's John Mason three times, the last a flurry from both sides, three seconds before the end of the session.

As BoxNation's broadcast started rolling, Stafford's Grant Cunningham stepped up to six rounds against Mitch Mitchell.

Cunningham put him down in the corner with a stinging right hook to the body in the fourth round, but 'Mad' Mitchell survived to the end.



Jason Welborn, right, attacks in his plucky attempt to relieve Frankie Gavin of the British welterweight title

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